













GOVERNOR PHILLIP AND HIS OFFICERS CELEBRATE THE RAISING OF THE  
BRITISH FLAG.

Rudra Mukherjee Collection

# THE ROMANCE OF THE WORLD

*Edited by Herbert Strang*

## THE EARLY SETTLERS



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# THE EARLY SETTLERS

## FOUNDING A COLONY

FROM the reign of Charles II until 1775 convicted prisoners were transported from England to America, and assigned to the Colonists there, who employed them as servants and labourers. In this year, however, the American States revolted, and, after a war which lasted until 1783, gained their independence and set up their own government. As America could no longer be used as a dumping ground for our criminals, they had to be kept at home, and soon became so numerous, that there were scarcely prisons enough to hold them.

As there were, at this time, one hundred and sixty crimes of which death was the penalty, executions became terribly frequent and numerous; strings of prisoners being hanged every Monday in London alone. This was done in the sight of thousands of spectators as a warning to evil doers, on whom, however, the effect produced was the reverse of salutary. Respectable people, therefore, grew tired of these barbarous and useless sights, and it was determined to try the recently discovered New South Wales as a penal settlement, with Norfolk Island as a stricter prison for convicts who should be re-convicted. Many of the prisoners in Australia escaped, or were released from captivity, and became honourable and respected citizens.

ON the 13th May, 1787, a small fleet of transports and store-ships, having on board over seven hundred convicts and a force of marines, together with provisions to last two years, the whole under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip, sailed from England with the object of establishing a colony in New South Wales. Early in the following year, after a prosperous voyage, the squadron came within sight of its destination, and Captain Phillip, leaving the slower vessels to follow, sailed ahead with a view to choosing the most eligible site for the new settlement, and dropped anchor in Botany Bay on the 18th January.

Phillip landing immediately on his arrival, an interview at once took place with a party of the natives. The latter were all armed, but on seeing the governor approach alone and unarmed, and with signs of friendship, they laid down their weapons and put on an amicable demeanour. Some presents offered by the Europeans were readily accepted, and the humane conduct of Cook's people and the present visitors was rewarded by the absence of all hostility between the two races while the ships remained in the bay. An examination of the capabilities of the harbour showed that, although capacious, it did not afford a shelter from the easterly winds, because, in consequence of its shallowness, ships of even a moderate draught would always be obliged to anchor opposite the entrance. An abundance of fresh water was found; but, even for building, the locality presented objectionable

features, inasmuch as the ground was low, sandy, and covered with numerous swamps.

The defects in the harbour and in the adjacent ground determined the governor to seek another situation; and he resolved to examine Port Jackson, the harbour mentioned by Cook as immediately on the north of Botany Bay. But that no time might be lost in the event of disappointment, the most elevated piece of ground in the neighbourhood was ordered to be cleared, and preparations to be made for landing.

Phillip, accompanied by several officers, then proceeded with three boats round to Port Jackson, where he arrived on the evening of the 23rd. The first sight of the new harbour, with its hundred bays, headlands, and islands, sheltered in all directions from every breeze which could give annoyance to the frailest ship, and protected from the ocean swell by two headlands which stood on either side the entrance, rugged but appropriate pillars, had the effect of effacing from the minds of the governor and his companions every feeling of regret arising from former disappointments. The various coves were examined with all expedition, and the preference was given to one distant about six miles from the heads, into which glided a fine stream of fresh water. It was named Sydney Cove, in honour of a peer of that title.

Another interview took place here with a party of aborigines. The blacks were armed with spears, and when they first came in sight of the Europeans, who had already landed, they voci-



ferated loudly against what they doubtless considered an intrusion on their territory. The conciliatory conduct of the governor, however, soon pacified them, and after a little time an interview took place. The conduct of one of the aborigines on this occasion was, for manliness, boldness, and discretion, not to be surpassed. He appeared to be the chief of his tribe, and to him the governor addressed himself, inviting him to the beach where the boat parties were engaged in cooking their dinner. He readily placed himself under the guidance of Phillip; but when he approached the marines, who were drawn up in line, and saw that by proceeding further he would be cut off from his companions, he stopped, and with great firmness, by word and gesture, threatened revenge if any advantage should be taken of his situation. He then went on with perfect calmness, and, scrutinizing the several objects which the camp presented, expressed his admiration of what he saw.

In passing near one of the headlands the boats were perceived by a number of the natives, twenty of whom waded into the water, unarmed, received what presents were offered, and examined the boats with an amount of curiosity which impressed the Europeans with a higher opinion of their intelligence than they had hitherto entertained. The confidence and manly behaviour of the aborigines induced the governor to give the place the name of Manly Cove, which it still bears.

Returning to Botany Bay, after remaining two

days at Port Jackson, Phillip found that the additional knowledge acquired respecting the former place went to show still further that the position was one unsuitable for a settlement, and accordingly he at once resolved to remove the fleet to the newly discovered port.

Preparations were immediately made for carrying the resolution into effect, when on the morning of the 24th the greatest astonishment was spread throughout the fleet by the appearance in the offing of two ships under French colours. In so remote a region visitors from Europe were very little expected, and their arrival, while the cause remained unknown, produced in some minds a temporary apprehension, accompanied by a multiplicity of conjectures. Phillip was the first to recollect that two ships had been sent out some time previously from France on a voyage of discovery, and rightly conjectured those to be the same. The opposition of the wind, and a strong current, prevented the strange vessels from at once working into the harbour, and even drove them out of sight again to the southward; but the governor did not think it necessary to delay his departure for the purpose of making further inquiry.

On the 25th of January, therefore, Phillip sailed for Port Jackson, giving orders that the remainder of the fleet should follow as soon as a strong breeze, which was then blowing, had abated. The *Supply* was scarcely out of sight when the French ships again appeared off the mouth of the harbour, and a boat was imme-

diately sent to them with offers of every information and assistance which, in their situation, they were likely to require. It was now ascertained that the ships were, as the governor had supposed, the *Boussole* and the *Astrolabe*, engaged in a voyage of discovery, under the conduct of Monsieur La Pérouse.

On the 26th the transports and store-ships, attended by the *Sirius*, finally left Botany Bay, and in a short time were assembled in Sydney Cove.

The debarkation, and the work of clearing the ground for the encampment as well as for the store-houses and other buildings, were now proceeded with. The labour attending the latter operation was very considerable. The coast, as well as the neighbouring country, was covered with wood, and the magnitude of the trees was such as to render not only the felling but the removal of them afterwards a task of no small difficulty. In the evening of the 26th, the colours were displayed on shore, and the governor, with several of the principal officers and others, assembled round the flag-staff, drank the king's health and success to the settlement, with an enthusiasm and vivacity appropriate to the occasion.

From this time to the end of the first week in February all was hurry and exertion. The plan of the encampment was formed, the materials to construct a temporary habitation for the governor brought out from England were put together, and hospital tents erected. For

the latter there was soon but too much occasion. In the passage from the Cape there had been but little sickness, even among the convicts; but soon after landing a dysentery prevailed, which, in many instances, proved fatal, and the scurvy began to rage with virulence. For those afflicted with the latter disorder, fish, vegetables and other fresh food were procured as much as possible; in the dysentery, the red gum of the tree which principally abounded on the coast, was found a very effective remedy.

The month of February was ushered in by a very violent storm of thunder and rain. The lightning struck and shivered a tree, killing five of a number of sheep which were in a shed beneath. The work of forming the encampment proceeded with alacrity and vigour, and, in the beginning of the month, some of the buildings required for general use were commenced.

The 7th was the memorable day which established a regular form of government on the coast of New South Wales. All possible solemnity was given to the proceedings. On a space of ground cleared for the purpose the entire colony was assembled—the military drawn up and under arms, the convicts stationed apart, and near the person of the governor those who were to hold the principal offices. The royal commission was read by Collins, the judge-advocate. By this instrument, Arthur Phillip was constituted captain-general and governor-in-chief over the territory of New South Wales, extending from Cape York, in the latitude of  $10^{\circ} 37'$ , to South Cape, in

the latitude of  $48^{\circ} 29'$ , including the adjacent islands in the Pacific Ocean within the latitude aforesaid, and of all the country inland to the westward, as far as the  $185^{\circ}$  of east longitude. The Act of Parliament establishing the court of judicature was next read, and, lastly, the patents under the Great Seal, empowering the proper persons to convene and hold those courts. The office of lieutenant-governor was conferred on Major Ross. A triple discharge of musketry concluded this part of the ceremony.

On the 14th of February, Lieutenant Phillip Gidley King was dispatched to colonize Norfolk Island—a country discovered and named by Captain Cook, and commended by him as a place of settlement. King, who was much esteemed by the governor for his perseverance and general merit in his profession, was appointed commandant of the little colony which he was dispatched to found. The party under his command consisted of a subaltern officer and six marines, a surgeon, two men who understood the cultivation and dressing of flax, which it was proposed to cultivate on the island, with nine male and six female convicts.

Written instructions were delivered by the governor to the commandant, who sailed for his destination in the armed tender. Having landed on the island, and taken the necessary measures for securing himself and people, King was immediately to proceed to the preparation of the flax plant, which grew spontaneously on the island; as likewise to the cultivation of cotton,

corn, and other products, with the seeds of which he was furnished. He was to inform himself of the nature of the soil, to observe what were the prevailing winds in the different seasons of the year, the best anchorage according to the season, the rise and fall of the tides, and the periods when the dry and rainy seasons began and ended. Provisions sufficient for six months' consumption were furnished to the expedition.

The principal advantages to be derived from the settlement of Norfolk Island were twofold. In the first place, here was a receptacle whither might be transmitted, from time to time, those convicts whose insubordination or crime rendered them unfit to reside at Port Jackson consistently with the safety and good order of the settlement. In the next place, the ascertained fertility of the island was such, that it was pretty certain, after the lapse of a short period, a large quantity of those necessities, which the colony must continue to draw from abroad, would be produced here, and be available whenever a dearth prevailed at the chief settlement.

On the 19th March, Lieutenant Ball returned from Norfolk Island, having landed the party sent out under King. The people, provisions, and stores had been set ashore in perfect safety, although five days were occupied in seeking a place where a landing could be effected. The commandant, in a letter to the governor, gave a glowing description of the country. He described the island as one entire wood, or rather as a garden overrun with pines, which in straight-

ness, size, and magnitude were far superior to any he had ever seen. The soil was not to be surpassed in fertility, and the grain and garden seeds which had been sown vegetated with great luxuriance. The island was seven miles in circumference, and bore evidences of volcanic origin; it was well watered by a rapid and copious stream flowing through a fine valley, and by abundant springs.

The climate was bland and salubrious, preserved from oppressive heats by constant breezes from the sea, and of so mild a temperature throughout the winter that vegetation continued without interruption. The flax-plant was found to grow in great plenty, and so luxuriantly that it sometimes attained the height of eight feet.

In the month of April, the governor undertook two expeditions into the interior, for the purpose of making himself acquainted with the country. In the first excursion, which occupied five days, he penetrated to a distance of fifteen miles from the sea, and gave names to several remarkable places. In the second, which occupied the same time, the party explored the country to a distance of thirty miles from the settlement. One of the chief objects of those journeys was the discovery of a river, which the situation of the hills led the governor to expect might be met with in the direction explored. No stream was met with, but the country was found to be so far fit for the purposes of cultivation that it was resolved to send a detachment to settle there, as

soon as the works of immediate necessity were completed at the harbour.

The month of May was marked by some unfortunate affrays with the natives. Of two men who were sent out in search of vegetables, one was carried off, having been dangerously wounded in the head, and was not again heard of; the other received a severe spear-wound, and narrowly escaped with his life. Two other men, who were sent to a bay to the eastward of the city to cut rushes, were found dead by a party who were sent to seek them, when their protracted absence occasioned doubts as to their safety. The dead bodies were covered with spear-wounds. From this circumstance the place was called Rushcutter's Bay, which name it bears to the present time.

To discover, if possible, the perpetrators of this latter outrage, the governor set out with an armed party, consisting of twelve persons, and traversed the country for a distance of some miles in the vicinity of the cove where the murders were committed. Numbers of aborigines were seen, but in every instance they avoided the Europeans. In returning, however, the colonists suddenly fell in with a large body, who were assembled at the mouth of the cove. Neither party saw the other till the Europeans approached within a distance of ten yards. One of the blacks immediately came forward, and made signs for the Europeans to retire; but the governor advancing alone, unarmed, and with friendly signs, the black left his spear aside, and became



confident. In a few minutes the colonists found themselves surrounded by two hundred and twelve men; but nothing occurred which could sanction the idea that the aborigines were accustomed to act with treachery, or inclined to take any cruel advantage of their superior force.

Numbers of women and children remained at a short distance behind; some of these the men brought forward to receive a few presents which were tendered by the governor. Nothing was seen among those people which could lead to the belief that any of them had been engaged in the murder of the rush-cutters, and the governor parted with them on friendly terms. When the blacks saw the party going towards the next cove, one of them, an old man, asked permission to go before. He did so; and as soon as he had ascended the adjacent hill, he held up both his hands, to signify to a party of about forty blacks who were assembled below, that they who were advancing were friends.

Further inquiries gave reason to suppose that, previous to the attack on the rush-cutters, one of the blacks had been killed and several wounded by the whites. Governor Phillip proclaimed the award of emancipation to any convict who should discover the aggressors. Notwithstanding these measures, the hostility between the two races continued, and was followed during the year by several acts of aggression on the part of the blacks, and by more than one murder.

Some progress had now been made towards the formation of a town. Lines were traced

out which distinguished the principal street, terminated by the governor's house and the criminal court. Other streets were marked out as the sites for houses, as the town came to be enlarged. Temporary barracks had been erected. The huts were composed, some of the soft wood of the cabbage-palm, others of upright posts, wattled with twigs and plastered with clay. The want of lime, for the making of which no suitable material could be discovered, prevented the erection of as many stone houses as were desirable. One of the most substantial of the buildings was the hospital, which was erected at the western side of the town. On the point of land forming the western boundary of the cove a small observatory had been raised, under the direction of Lieutenant Dawes, who was charged by the Board of Longitude with the duty of observing an expected comet. A farm was cleared in the vicinity of the cove next to the town, in an easterly direction. It contained about nine acres, being the ground at present partially occupied by the Botanical Gardens, and was sown with corn of different kinds. The plants and fruit-trees brought from Brazil and the Cape were found to thrive well.

In one of his excursions, the governor discovered a spot at the head of Port Jackson, which appeared to be well adapted for cultivation; and to this place, which he named Rose Hill, he dispatched a party, consisting of a captain, two lieutenants of marines, and twenty-five non-commissioned officers and privates, together with

fifty convicts, with the view to cultivating a farm and forming a settlement there.

Early in July a bold act of aggression was committed by the aborigines. A general order had been issued to the Europeans sent out in fishing-parties to give a portion of all fish caught to such blacks as happened to be present, however small the quantity taken might be. On the occasion in question, about twenty aborigines, armed with spears, came down to the spot where the fishers were employed, and, without remark or ceremony, seized the greater part of the fish which was in the seine. While this was going on, a still larger party of the blacks were observed standing at a short distance, with their spears poised in readiness to be thrown, had those who took the fish been resisted. After these transactions, an officer with a party of marines always accompanied the fishing-party. This was the first act of unprovoked violence which the blacks committed against the settlers; and to this it was thought they were driven by necessity, for it was now becoming apparent that they were distressed for want of food. In the preceding summer they would not eat either the shark or the sting-ray; but now even coarser meat was acceptable, for a young whale which had been washed to the beach they carried away and devoured.

About this time, an imposition practised by one of the people occupied for some time the attention of the entire settlement. The deceit consisted in a pretence advanced by a prisoner

that he had discovered a gold-mine on the shores of the harbour, between the town and the sea. On two occasions, the governor dispatched parties, under the guidance of the pretended discoverer, to ascertain the place where the treasure lay. On the first occasion, the man succeeded, under a trivial pretence, in quitting the party, and returning to Sydney without confessing his fault. For this misconduct he was punished; but still persisting in his assertion that gold, of which he produced what he called specimens, was to be found in the place indicated, a second party was ordered to accompany him, with the view to setting the question at rest. The officer threatening to shoot him if he again attempted to run away, the man now admitted that he had been practising a deceit. He said the object he had in view, in propagating the falsehood, was to obtain from a vessel, then about to return to Europe some clothing and other articles in exchange for the gold-dust with which he should promise to supply the crew. The specimen which he produced he had manufactured from a guinea and a brass button.

The man was a second time severely punished; but notwithstanding the confession and punishment, there were numbers who still believed that he had really discovered the golden ore, alleging that he was induced to say his story was a fabrication, with the view to securing to himself the chief advantage of the discovery at some future period.

In March 1789 a vessel arrived from Norfolk

Island bringing intelligence that a scheme, luckily frustrated, although systematically formed, had been devised by the convicts, to rise against their officers, take possession of the settlement, and quit the island by the first vessel which they could seize. The plan of insurrection was this : Mr. King, the commandant, was to be seized on the first Saturday after the arrival in the bay of any ship, except the *Sirius*, the presence of which vessel, being an armed frigate, would, of course, frustrate the intended rising. Saturday was chosen because on that day the commandant visited a farm which he had established at a short distance from the township, while, on the same day, the military were accustomed to go to the woods for the purpose of bringing in cabbage-palm. The commandant having been seized, a message was to be sent as from him to the other officers and to the soldiers, who were to be seized and secured by parties of the conspirators placed in ambuscade for the purpose.

The first part of the plot having been carried into effect, a signal was to be made to the ship to send ashore a boat, the crew of which were to be made prisoners on their landing. Two or three of the conspirators were then to go off to the vessel in a boat belonging to the island, and inform the master that the ship's boat had been stove on the rocks, and that the commandant requested that another might be sent ashore. The second boat was also to be captured; and the settlement and the vessel

being now alike at the mercy of the conspirators, the ship was to be seized, and all the malcontents having embarked, they were to proceed to Otaheite, there to establish themselves. In acknowledgment of the mildness which had always characterized Lieutenant King's command, the fugitives purposed leaving some provisions for the use of the officers and for such of the people as remained behind.

An attempt would have been made to carry this plan into execution on the arrival at the island of the vessel which carried back to Sydney the intelligence of the frustration of the scheme; but the settlement was indebted for its preservation from anarchy and bloodshed, perhaps from ruin, to the fidelity of a female prisoner. The woman, having been admitted into the secret of the plot, communicated her information to a seaman who resided with the commandant. The man apprised King of the danger with which he was threatened, and measures were at once adopted which had the effect of defeating the intentions of the conspirators. As a precaution against similar attempts for the future, the ground in the immediate vicinity of the town was at once cleared of the wood in which the prisoners had been accustomed to assemble and devise their secret measures. All the free people were enrolled as a militia, and a military guard was mounted every night as an additional security.

The island was scarcely relieved from the storm which this conspiracy had threatened when it

was visited by a storm of a different character. Early in the morning of the 26th February, a heavy gale commenced to blow, the rain, at the same time, falling in torrents. As the day approached, the wind became quite a hurricane; and, at four o'clock, a scene of devastation presented itself on every side. Large pines of one hundred and eighty and two hundred feet in length and twenty to thirty feet in circumference, were strewn on the ground by the force of the wind. From the dawn of day till noon, the gale continued with unabated violence. At every instant pines and rocks of the largest dimensions were borne down. The trees, tearing up roots and rocks in their fall, left in the earth chasms of eight or ten feet deep. Those trees that did not fall before the fury of the blast, bent their heads almost to the ground. The public granary was levelled with the earth by a large oak-tree, which stove the casks and scattered the corn and stores. At noon the gale had reached its utmost violence, and at this time whole forests were torn up by the roots. At an early hour, the vale which formed the site of the settlement was overflowed with water descending from the hills, and presented the appearance of a large navigable river. The gardens, public and private, were wholly destroyed, their produce, as well as the field crops, being washed away by the overwhelming torrent.

Early in June, Phillip set out on an excursion to Broken Bay, with the view to ascertaining whether or not it was practicable to reach the

mountains from the head of that harbour. The result of this visit was the discovery of the Hawkesbury—an event of the greatest importance to the future career of the colony. Not having sufficient provisions to allow of his tracing the stream to its source, the governor returned, after an absence of ten days, with the intention of revisiting the river.

This design he immediately set about carrying into effect, and on the 29th, set off a second time, with a considerable party, and with provisions for twenty-one days.

On the 14th July he returned, having traced the river to the place where Windsor now stands. The indications of extensive freshes in the stream, which here presented themselves, deterred the explorers from proceeding further, or remaining for a longer period. The traces of inundations rising from twelve to forty feet above the ordinary level, were evident in various places. The windings of the stream were found exceedingly picturesque, and the soil on the banks very fertile. The river, which was the first of any note met with in the colony, was named the Hawkesbury, after the nobleman who was at that time at the head of the Council of Trade and Plantations. The discovery of this beautiful and noble stream is not the least of the honours to which the first governor of the colony is entitled.

In November the ration of provisions hitherto issued to the people of the settlement was reduced to two-thirds of the full allowance. This



measure was deemed necessary to guard against a scarcity. Provisions sufficient for two years had been originally landed in the colony; but this stock had recently suffered very extensively from the ravages of rats, which vermin had become disagreeably numerous in the settlement. A quantity of flour, sufficient to maintain the colony for four months, had been received by a vessel dispatched to the Cape of Good Hope for a cargo of that commodity; but as two months only of the time for which provisions had been originally laid in remained to expire, there were considerable grounds for apprehending a scarcity. A similar reduction in the ration was made on board the vessels in the harbour, the seamen receiving only two-thirds of the allowance usually distributed on board king's ships.

The year 1790 commenced by the establishing of the first emancipist settler. He was a man who throughout evinced a disposition to return to honest and industrious pursuits; and the governor, at once to encourage others, and to make an experiment as to the practicability of a man maintaining himself by the labour of his own hands at that early period, caused two acres of ground to be cleared, and a house built for his use, preparatory to giving him a grant of land. He was also supplied, at the expense of Government, with implements of husbandry, some seed, and livestock.

The anxiety with which the arrival of a ship from England was now looked for, in consequence of the scarcity of provisions, led to the

erection of a flag-staff, and the establishment of a signal-station at the south head of the harbour, in a position where the signals would at once notify to the inhabitants of the town the appearance of a ship in the offing, and direct the vessel towards the entrance to the port.

The provisions in the stores still decreasing, and there being no prospect of the immediate arrival of a fresh supply, the governor resolved, as a further precaution against famine, to send to Norfolk Island a considerable proportion of the people of the chief settlement. Recent intelligence from the little colony under the command of King, showed that the produce of the island was much more than sufficient to maintain its population. Most of the stock, however, was garden plants, which grew in the greatest luxuriance, together with a quantity of Indian corn still growing. As these supplies could not conveniently be sent to Sydney, it was determined to send the consumers to the place where the provisions were produced, and accordingly two hundred and eighty persons, including two companies of marines, under the command of the lieutenant-governor, were embarked on board two vessels, and sailed for Norfolk Island on the 5th March.

This voyage proved fatal to the frigate that carried the governor's pennant in the fleet which bore the colony to New South Wales. After a prosperous voyage of seven days the vessels arrived at Norfolk Island, where the people were immediately landed. Scarcely was the debark-

ation completed, however, when rough weather set in, and before the provisions could be landed from the *Sirius*, that vessel, after a vigorous but ineffectual effort to get her clear of the shore, was driven on the rocks, where she soon bulged, and was irrecoverably lost. All the people were saved, but not without difficulty, having been drawn on shore through the surf on a raft.

This was a great misfortune to the entire settlement, as the wrecked vessel was to have gone in quest of succour for the colony, as soon as she had accomplished this voyage; and the arrival of the *Supply*, bringing intelligence of the wreck, was the forerunner of a general gloom, such as had never before fallen on the young community.

In this crisis, the governor immediately determined on calling an assembly of all the naval and marine officers. A council was accordingly held, and it was unanimously determined that martial law should be proclaimed in the settlement; that all livestock should be considered as the property of the State; that justice should be administered by a court-martial to be composed of seven officers, the concurrence of five to be necessary in a sentence of death; and that there should be two locks on the door of the public store, one to be in the keeping of a person appointed on behalf of the seamen, the other of a person appointed by the military. The day following the meeting of the council, all the people in the town, troops, seamen, and others, having been assembled, the resolutions which had been

adopted were publicly read, and all engaged to abide by the temporary laws, so long as their enforcement was deemed necessary, by passing under the king's colours.

These resolutions were immediately carried into effect. A meeting of all the officers of the settlement, civil as well as military, was next called. The situation of the colony having been thoroughly considered in this assembly, it was determined to reduce still lower the ration of provisions, which was already too low. Every exertion was to be made in fishing for the general benefit. All private boats were to be surrendered for the public use, and no effort was to be spared to put a stop to the malpractice of robbing gardens. One of the steps adopted with the view to attaining this last-mentioned end is rather novel in its character. To prevent nocturnal depredations, all suspected persons were locked up when night set in, to be released only when the light of day afforded a guarantee against theft. People were to be employed to kill, for the public use, such animals as the country afforded; and in pursuance of this resolution, the services of such men as had been employed to shoot for individuals were given up for the public benefit.

A fishery was established at Botany Bay, but the quantity of fish taken there did not repay the labour of transferring it to Sydney, and the men were accordingly removed to Port Jackson, where their labours were better rewarded. The supply, however, was never otherwise than

inconsiderable, looking at the requirements of the colony. Nor were the shooting parties more successful. Three kangaroos were all the game that was obtained in the course of a month, although the men employed were excellent marksmen, and were supplied with an extra ration, in consideration of the fatigue they underwent.

Two years had now elapsed since a supply of provisions from abroad had been received. The colonists began to revolve in their minds what could have prevented the arrival of those ships which were expected from England. The opinion generally arrived at was that the non-arrival of supplies was attributable to accident, rather than to procrastination, a view of the case which rendered the circumstances of the colony more distressing, for if the vessels dispatched with supplies had been wrecked, or had been checked by some other accident in the course of their voyage, the home Government might remain in ignorance of the untoward circumstances, until the young settlement had been ruined as the result.

In this position of affairs the governor resolved to send the *Supply*, armed tender, which was the only hope of the colony after the wreck of the *Sirius*, to Batavia, for a stock of provisions. She was soon ready for sea; but her tonnage was trifling, when compared with the necessities of the colony. Lieutenant Ball, her commander, was directed to procure a supply of eight months' provisions as a cargo for his own vessel; and to carry back in a ship chartered for the purpose

200,000 lbs. weight of flour, 80,000 lbs. of beef, 60,000 lbs. of pork, and 70,000 lbs. of rice, together with a quantity of necessaries for the hospital.

“The expectation of this relief,” says Collins, “was indeed distant; but yet it was more to be depended upon than that which might be coming from England. Lieutenant Ball’s passage lay through the regions of fine weather, and the hope of every one was fixed upon the little vessel that was to convey him; yet it was painful to contemplate our very existence as depending upon her safety, to consider that a rough sea, a hidden rock, or the violence of elemental strife, might in one fatal moment precipitate us, with the little bark that had all our hopes on board, to the lowest abyss of misery. In the well-known ability and undoubted exertions of her commander, however, under God, all placed their dependence.”

The vessel sailed on the 17th of April, having on board Lieutenant King, and Andrew Millar, the late commissary, whose ill-health obliged him to resign his employment and return to England. Lieutenant Ball was to touch at Norfolk Island, and take on board Lieutenant Bradley, of the *Sirius*, whose knowledge of the coast was such that the governor had chosen him to proceed to Batavia, and take command of the vessel which was to be chartered.

When the *Supply* sailed, there were in the public stores provisions sufficient for eight months, and the duration of the voyage was estimated

at six months. If within this latter period supplies arrived not from some quarter, the colony would be destitute of some of the necessities of life.

The ration now issued to each man for seven days was two and a half pounds of flour, two pounds of rice, and two pounds of pork. When cooked, this was barely sufficient to sustain life; and the inevitable consequence of the scarcity was that labour was almost suspended, for want of energy to proceed. The haggard countenances of the people plainly bespoke the privations and hardships they underwent; and the men, no longer able to perform a full day's labour, were required to work only during the forenoons.

A kangaroo, weighing one hundred and eighty pounds, which was killed at one of the out-settlements, was regarded as a valuable addition to the stock of public provisions. Salt began to fall short, together with the other supplies. This deficiency, however, was supplied by the process of boiling the sea-water, and extracting the saline particles. Fishing-tackle, so much in requisition at this period, also began to be scarce, and, profiting by knowledge gained from the blacks, some men were employed in manufacturing lines from the bark of a tree used by the natives for a similar purpose. The quantity of fish taken during the month of May by the seine, and with lines was 2000 lbs. weight, or a supply sufficient to ration thirty-one men for four weeks at the allowance then issued.

The month of June set in with heavy rains

and strong winds, which had the effect of interrupting the operations of the fishermen, and putting an end to other necessary labours. This state of things increased the general gloom.

On the third of the month, however, the colonists were destined to experience a change of fortune. On the afternoon of that day, the signal of a ship in the offing, so long and so anxiously looked for, appeared at the station at South Head. Every heart in the settlement bounded with joy, such as had not been experienced by the colonists since they left England, and every countenance expressed the liveliest satisfaction. The whole settlement was instantly in commotion. Although a strong gale was blowing at the time, some of the officers went off in a boat, and joined the ship outside the Heads.

The vessel welcomed with so much pleasure proved to be the *Lady Juliana* transport, from London and Plymouth; from which latter port she sailed ten months previously with two hundred and twenty-two female prisoners on board.

The joy diffused by the appearance of this vessel was soon dispelled by the announcement of certain intelligence which she brought. Three months after the sailing of the *Lady Juliana* from England, His Majesty's ship, the *Guardian*, of forty-four guns, commanded by Lieutenant Edward Riou, took her departure for the colony. This vessel had on board a supply of two years' provisions for the use of the settlement, a quantity of clothing and bedding, together with sails and cordage for the ships, a large assortment of



implements of agriculture, and other stores. The ship arriving safely at the Cape of Good Hope, Lieutenant Riou here took on board for New South Wales a quantity of livestock, and completed a garden prepared under the immediate direction of Sir Joseph Banks, and containing about one hundred and fifty of the finest fruit-trees. A large quantity of valuable private property, consigned to the officers of the settlement by their friends in England, was also on board the richly freighted vessel.

Resuming her voyage on the 23rd of December, 1789, the *Guardian* struck against an island of ice, and was so much injured that, to save her from immediately sinking, it was found necessary to throw overboard the greater part of her valuable cargo. The stock and the fruit-trees were all lost in this manner, as well as the greater part of the private property, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the ship herself was carried safely back to the Cape.

The *Guardian* was a fast-sailing vessel, and were it not for the misfortune just narrated, would have arrived at Sydney in the beginning of this year, in time to prevent the many and various evils which had befallen the colony, in consequence of the expected supplies from England failing to arrive. This calamity, however, had the effect of retarding the progress of the settlement for some years.

The *Guardian* had just regained the Cape after her misfortune when the *Lady Juliana* arrived there. One-third of the stores on board the

former vessel were transferred to the latter for transmission to Sydney.

The quantity of provisions now added to the public stock only slightly ameliorated the condition of the settlement. On the 20th, however, the colony was effectually relieved by the arrival of a store-ship, after a passage of five months, from England. This ship, which was named the *Justinian*, and was commanded by Benjamin Maitland, narrowly escaped wreck at the very close of her quick and prosperous voyage. She was off the entrance of Port Jackson on the 2nd, when, the wind suddenly changing, she was driven northward as far as the thirty-second degree of latitude. A heavy gale springing up, the vessel was with the greatest difficulty saved from total wreck. The wind blew directly towards the land, and to prevent the vessel being dashed on the shore, the captain was forced, as a last expedient, to come to an anchor.

The ship rode within a very short distance of the rocks on which the storm was driving the billows; but the proximity of the danger was the providential cause of safety. The rebound of the waves, acting on the hull, prevented the straining of the cables, which otherwise would not have been capable of holding the ship at her moorings, so great was the combined force of wind and waves. The expedient of anchoring a vessel close to the shore to save her, by the aid of the returning current, from being dashed on the land is not new in navigation; but the case

of the *Justinian* is deserving of especial mention, in consideration of her peculiar position, and the important consequences which depended on her fate.

A few days after the arrival of the *Justinian*, three transports entered the harbour, having on board, besides a large number of prisoners, a detachment of the New South Wales corps. These vessels, so far from increasing the resources of the colonists, only renewed, to some extent, their former distresses. In the course of the voyage a plan had been formed by the convicts to take one of the ships. The conspiracy was frustrated, and, as a measure of safety, the people were closely confined between decks during the remainder of the voyage. The result was that fever and disease broke out in all the vessels, carrying off large numbers, and leaving the survivors in a miserable condition. Some died on board the vessels before they could be landed, some in the boats which conveyed them to the shore, and some on the wharf where they were landed. Thus was the offence of a few visited on many, and a contemplated crime punished in a way which could never have been foreseen by its designers.

In July the governor laid down the lines of a regular town. The principal street extended one mile from the landing place, and ran in a westerly direction. Its width was two hundred feet, and, on either side, huts were to be erected capable of containing ten persons each. These dwellings were to be at the distance of sixty feet

from each other, and garden ground for each was to be allotted at the rear. Thus was commenced the city which has since not inaptly been named the Queen of the Southern Hemisphere.

Since the flight of the two aboriginals previously mentioned, little or no intercourse had taken place between the Europeans and the blacks. The latter, consistently with a shyness which they manifested almost immediately after the arrival of the colonists, shunned the settlement as much as possible, while the former were too busily occupied with their own affairs to devote any attention to the rude tribes of the surrounding woods.

In the early part of September a party of officers, proceeding on an excursion to Broken Bay, met with the black who had resided so long at the governor's house. The name of this man was Bennillong. In recognition of the kindness with which he had been uniformly treated during his residence at Sydney, the black sent to the governor as a present a portion of some fish which the tribe had procured. The governor, on hearing of the circumstance, proceeded from the signal-station at the Heads, where he then happened to be, to the place where the natives were assembled. Here he met Bennillong, and also the black who escaped a few days after his capture. The name of this man was Cole-be. All the wearing apparel which could be spared by the boat-party was presented to the aborigines, and an arrangement was come to that, in a few days, the governor should return with other

presents. The cove where the interview took place was full of blacks, who had assembled there to feast on a whale that had been washed ashore. Twenty or thirty had drawn themselves into a circle round Phillip, who, fearing that something might occur to excite the violence of the blacks, began slowly to retire to his boat.

Bennillong had, during the conference, formally presented several of his countrymen. To one of these Phillip was desirous of paying marked attention, and stepped forth to meet him, holding out both hands as he proceeded. The savage, either thinking that the governor meditated hostility, or impelled by some unaccountable impulse, lifted a spear from the grass with his foot, and instantaneously placing it in the throwing-stick, darted the weapon at the governor. The spear entered a little above the collar-bone, and with such force was it thrown that the barb came out on the other side. Several other spears rapidly followed, but no further mischief was done. The weapon which had taken effect was with difficulty broken by one of the officers, and Phillip was led to the boat. Four muskets which were in the boat were brought into requisition against the hostile blacks; but so little precaution had been adopted by the Europeans that only one could be discharged.

The spear which the governor had received was extracted by the surgeon, and in ten days the wound was healed.

Towards the end of February 1791, a vessel, dispatched a few months previously to Norfolk

Island with supplies, returned to Sydney, bringing back the people of the *Sirius*. The provisions sent to the island arrived opportunely for the preservation of the settlement. In the month of August, when the vessel appeared off the island, there were in the stores sufficient provisions only for a few days, even at a very reduced ration. Were it not for a large supply of wild birds with which the islanders were providentially supplied, they would have been reduced to the very last extremity. The birds in question answered the description of the puffin. They came in from the sea every evening in such numbers that they darkened the air in their flight. Descending on a mountain contiguous to the town, they deposited their eggs in holes which they made in the ground, and in the morning returned to the ocean, where they procured their sustenance. From two to three thousand of these birds were frequently taken in a night; and the fact that their flesh partook of the nature of their food did not much lessen their importance to people situated as the islanders were, so that while provisions were scarce the birds were eagerly sought. Torches made of the pine-tree, indigenous to the country, guided the fowlers to the haunts where the prey were gathered together in thick-set clusters.

Since the wreck of their vessel, the people of the *Sirius* had been usefully employed in removing some rocks which obstructed the passage through the reef which girded the coast; and a survey of the island had been made by Lieutenant

Bradley. From this survey it was computed that the island was capable of maintaining between three and four hundred families.

A daring escape from the colony was effected in March. The leader of the enterprise was William Bryant, an emancipist. He had long been employed by the governor as superintendent of the fishing party, and although it was known that he meditated quitting the country, with such address did he act that he and his companions were at sea some time before their flight was discovered. With Bryant went his wife and two children, and seven men, all under sentence of transportation. The boat in which the fugitives sailed was in good order, and two or three of the crew understood something of navigation.

There was good reason to believe that the captain of a Dutch vessel had encouraged and aided the escape. Subsequent events confirmed this conjecture. The fugitives arrived safely at Timor, where they told a plausible tale, to the effect that they had been cast away at sea. The story was for some time believed, but the language used by the runaways towards each other, and certain misconduct of which they were guilty, exciting suspicion, they were apprehended and examined, when their true characters were divulged. The Dutch governor delivered them to the captain of a British ship, by whom they were carried to England the year following their escape.

From March to September nothing of importance transpired, the arrival of five transports

excepted. Four of these were a part of a squadron of nine transports despatched to the colony with two thousand and fifty male and female convicts. These vessels sailed from Plymouth in the month of March of the previous year, and were a part of the squadron long known in the colony as the Second Fleet. At Rose Hill, or Parramatta, the name which the locality now assumed, and thenceforward retained, some unpleasant encounters with the natives occurred, occasioned, in the first instance, by the wanton destruction by a white man of a canoe, the property of an aboriginal. The name of the injured black was Ballooderry. He was generally regarded by the Europeans as one of the finest young men to be found among the aboriginals. Previous to the destruction of his canoe, he had always evinced the best disposition towards the colonists; but his anger on account of the wanton destruction of his little bark—an act of aggression which was the less excusable, inasmuch as its owner had been accustomed to use it in fishing for the officers at Parramatta—knew no bounds; and he at once recorded a vow of revenge, which he fulfilled to the annoyance and injury not only of individuals, but of the entire settlement.

Some of the convicts who arrived in the last ships soon became troublesome. A party of twenty having supplied themselves with a stock of provisions, and a quantity of arms, such as knives and tomahawks, started into the interior, intending, as they afterwards alleged, to proceed, such was their ignorance as well as infatu-



ation, overland to China ! They returned from time to time in small parties, exhausted with fatigue and hunger. These desertions becoming frequent, a proclamation was at length issued, that for the future the fugitives would be fired at wherever they were met, and when captured would be visited with severe punishment.

Some of the ships which had recently arrived, attempted to establish a whale-fishery on the coast. A Mr. Melvill, one of the commanders, killed seven sperm whales in the course of as many days, in the immediate vicinity of Port Jackson, and reported on his return that in the course of ten days he saw no less than fifteen thousand whales. The roughness of the weather, however, greatly interfered with fishing operations, and of the seven killed only two were secured, owing to this cause. The commanders of other vessels confirmed the reports as to the abundance of the fish; but although several were killed, the fishery was finally abandoned, as not being sufficiently remunerative. The want of success was attributed to gales and currents.

1792. As the year advanced, misery again pervaded the settlement. Provisions became scarce, and the result was famine, sickness and death. The people who arrived by the last vessels were altogether prostrate, and, unable to shake off the debility which had seized upon them, died by scores. Those who were strong plundered the public cornfields and stores, and thus aggravated the scarcity. In May, the ration was reduced to a quantity of flour, maize and salt,

provisions barely sufficient to support life. The greater part of the provisions consisted of maize, and this was ground or broken by means of hand-mills, with an amount of labour which greatly enhanced its value. Both at Sydney and Parramatta, parties were employed to shoot kangaroos and other game, for the use of the sick, and the fisheries were put into operation with renewed vigour, for the purpose of adding to the stock of fresh food.

On the 20th June, the appearance of a ship diffused satisfaction proportional to the misery which the colony suffered, and the joy was increased when it was ascertained that the welcome vessel was the *Atlantic*, from Calcutta, with a cargo of rice and other provisions. By this vessel a small number of sheep and cattle was added to the stock of the settlement. A quantity of seeds and plants, selected from the East India Company's Botanical Gardens, was also brought to the colony by Lieutenant Bowen.

The provisions received by this vessel assisted in warding off the approaches of famine, although they ameliorated but little the condition of the colonists, owing to their inferior quality. The ration was again reduced, and affairs began to wear a gloomy aspect, when, on the 26th July, the signal of a ship in sight was made at the flag-staff, and in a few hours the *Britannia* store-ship anchored in the harbour, after a passage of twenty-three weeks from Falmouth. The *Britannia* was the first of three ships which were to be dispatched to the colony in quick succession,

so that there was every reason to hope that, ere long, famine, whose dark shadow had so long lain on the settlement, would be effectually banished; at all events, for a considerable period.

A vessel arrived towards the middle of the month, after a tedious voyage of thirty-three weeks from England, by way of Rio Janeiro and the Cape of Good Hope. This vessel added to the circulating medium dollars to the amount of one thousand pounds sterling. The money was remitted by the Home Government to pay the wages of the artificers, as well as the salaries of the superintendents. The remittance proved very acceptable, both to the authorities and to the colonists, for money to meet the requirements of the public service had long been scarce, much to the annoyance of the Government, and greatly to the inconvenience of its creditors.

In December, Phillip began to make preparations for his departure for England. The necessary arrangements having been completed, a detachment of marines, who were to accompany the governor, were embarked in the *Atlantic*, the vessel chosen for the voyage. On the evening of the 10th, Phillip himself proceeded to the ship, attended to the water's side by the officers of the civil department. He was received at the wharf by Major Grose, at the head of the New South Wales Corps, the soldiers as he passed paying him all the honours due to his rank. Next morning the vessel sailed, and Governor Phillip bid adieu for ever to the shores of Australia.

Phillip was the Æneas of New South Wales—

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the conductor of the fleet that bore its founders over tempestuous seas, through severe climes, and even amid those dangers usually incident to war; for this was a period when wars were frequent among the European nations. He was the chief contriver of those arrangements by which it was firmly established, and its absolute ruler for a period of five years. The leader of what must be regarded as the forlorn hope of Australian colonization, he never shrunk from the dangers and difficulties which presented themselves from the first outset of the enterprise, and increased at every step taken in advance. Every present danger was met face to face; every future difficulty foreseen, and, as far as was possible, provided against.

## TROUBLES WITH THE NATIVES

THE Aborigines of Australia are a puzzle to ethnologists. They appear to be a distinct people, having none of the characteristics either mental or physical of the natives of the surrounding countries. Physically they are well proportioned, but not muscular; and their dark colour, and the shape of the skull, show that they are related to the negroid races. Their height ranges from five feet four inches, to five feet seven inches. The head is small, the body

slender, the arms and legs round and muscular. Their hair is jet black, long, and lank, but their eyes are large, full, and very expressive. Mentally, they stand very low in the scale of humanity. They are the most ignorant of all the races of the world, and the most destitute of implements either of war or peace. They do not till the ground, but live on roots and herbs, and on the products of their simple hunting and fishing. Some of the tribes are cannibals. At the time of the English invasion, the natives possessed wooden spears, and shields made with flint knives. They had also the *woomera*, or throwing stick, which assisted them in the discharge of their spears, and the *boomerang*, a weapon similar to one in use among a Hindu tribe, and also, according to some, among the ancient Egyptians. The aborigines, at present, number about 18,000, and they are gradually, but surely, becoming extinct.

ON Captain Phillip's departure the government devolved upon Major Francis Grose, the senior officer of the 102nd Regiment or New South Wales Corps. Major Grose was, after a time, succeeded as lieutenant-governor by Captain Paterson, and during the principal part of the period of rule of these two officers—nearly three years—the government of the settlement was practically a military despotism, of which the officers of the New South Wales Corps were the administrators.

On the 16th of January, 1793, the ship *Bellona* arrived from England with a number of emigrant

settlers. The conditions under which they came out were that they should be provided with a free passage, be furnished with agricultural tools and implements by the Government, have two years' provisions, and grants of land free of expense. They were likewise to have the labour of a certain number of prisoners, who were also to be provided with two years' rations, and one year's clothing from the public stores. The situation of the land assigned to them by the governor was eight or ten miles to the westward of Sydney, at a place known as the Kangaroo Ground, but which the new settlers called Liberty Plains. Several of the military officers and the clergyman also selected grants of land there.

Collins, in his history, says: "They began their settlements in high spirits, and they were allowed each the use of ten convicts. From their exertions, the lieutenant-governor was sanguine in being enabled to increase considerably the cultivation of the country. They got a great deal of work done, by hiring gangs on those days when the convicts on the public works did not work for the Government, the great labour of burning the timber, after it had been cut down, requiring some such extra aid." But notwithstanding these great advantages, and this very promising beginning, the Liberty Plains settlement did not prosper, owing principally to the inferior quality of the soil. As the country became opened up, it was seen that the alluvial lands at the Hawkesbury and other places offered

much greater advantages than the land they had cleared, and Liberty Plains was, after a time, nearly abandoned.

It was found on thrashing the wheat of last harvest that it produced, on an average, from seventeen to eighteen bushels an acre. The free settlers, after reserving a sufficiency for their own consumption and for seed, were able to supply the Government with twelve hundred bushels, for which they were paid at the rate of five shillings the bushel. The result of their operations was regarded as highly satisfactory; but a great drawback to their success still existed in the want of livestock. Every shipment of horned cattle for the first few years of the existence of the colony was unfortunate; many of them died on the voyage out, and many of those that were landed strayed and were lost. Sheep had not turned out much better. They had been placed in enclosures, and so saved from loss by straying, but many had been killed by the natives or native dogs.

The latter part of 1793 was another period of great privation. Some accounts say it was the worst time which the colonists ever endured: for although the crops of wheat and maize were tolerably good, there was not a pound of imported flour in the settlement, and the facilities for grinding were quite inadequate to supply the wants of the people. The weekly ration now consisted of nothing but the following cereals: three pounds of wheat, five pounds of maize, two pints of peas, and two of grain. Colonel

Collins, speaking of the state of things at this period, says : “ This was universally felt as the worst ration which had ever been served from His Majesty’s stores; and by the labouring convict particularly so, as no article of grain was prepared for him, so as to be immediately made use of. The quantity that was now to be ground, and the numbers who brought grain to the mill, kept it employed all the night as well as the day; and so from the scarcity of mills, every man was compelled to wait for his turn, the day had broken and the drum beat for labour, before many who went into the mill-house at night had been able to get their corn ground.” Privation, as usual, brought crime, and thefts of provisions again became frequent.

Up to this period it appears that no tame animal had been killed in the settlement for sale as food. The only fresh meat procurable was game, and this, from the number of persons constantly employed in shooting, or from some other cause, had again become very scarce. But at this time an event occurred which attracted much attention. This was no less than the killing of a sheep by a settler for sale to the public. The carcass was disposed of in small quantities, and realized about six pounds sterling. The price of livestock at this time was enormous. A cow, believed to be in calf, was sold for eighty pounds; and her calf when it was born, proving to be a male, was sold for fifteen pounds. “ About the middle of the month,” says Colonel Collins (speaking of January 1794), “ one small cow



and a Bengal steer were killed; and this was the third time that fresh beef had been tasted by the colonists, once when the lieutenant-governor and the officers of the settlement were entertained by the captain of a Spanish ship, which visited Port Jackson. At that time, however, had they not been informed that they were eating beef, they would never have discovered it by the flavour; and it certainly happened to more than one Englishman, that day, to eat his favourite viand without recognizing the taste."

In March 1795 it was ascertained from descriptions given by the natives that large animals with horns existed somewhere in the interior. It was at once suspected, and with truth, that they were the offspring of the cattle which had disappeared so strangely soon after the settlement was formed. Efforts were soon made to discover their exact whereabouts, but for some time without success. About eight months afterwards, however, they were found at a place about fifty miles from Sydney, beyond the Nepean River. The number of the herd had increased to upwards of sixty. The place where they were discovered was named the Cow-pastures, and was the best grassed district which, at that time, had been discovered in the country. They were not interfered with, and consequently increased very rapidly, and formed the stock from which most of the wild cattle of the colony have sprung.

In August 1795 a vessel, which was driven by

contrary winds to take shelter at Port Stephens, found there four white men who were at first supposed to be shipwrecked seamen, but who turned out to be runaway convicts, who had been missing for nearly five years, and were supposed to have perished. They were brought to Sydney, and gave a most favourable account of the treatment they had met with from the natives of that part of the coast. The blacks, they said, had given them food and shelter, and supported them for years with the most unvarying kindness, considering, as the convicts discovered, when they had been there long enough to understand the language, that they were unfortunate strangers thrown by misfortune upon their shores, and therefore entitled to assistance and protection.

A few extracts from Collins will give an idea of the daily life of the colonists at this period : “ Some natives, who had observed the increasing number of the settlers on the banks of the Hawkesbury, and had learned that they were solicitous to discover other fresh-water rivers, for the purpose of forming settlements, assured them that, at no great distance from Botany Bay, there was a river of fresh water which ran into the sea. As this was thought not to be improbable, two men of the military, who were deemed of sufficient judgment and discretion, were accompanied by a native, as a guide, who possessed a knowledge of the country, and named the place where the fresh water would be found to run.

“ Great expectations were formed of this

excursion, from the confidence with which the native repeatedly asserted the existence of a fresh-water river. On the 20th, however, the party returned, with an account that the native had very soon walked beyond his own knowledge of the country, and had trusted to them to bring him safe back; that having penetrated about twenty miles south of Botany Bay, they came to a large inlet of the sea (Port Hacking) which formed a small harbour. The head of this they rounded, without discovering any river of fresh water near it. The country they described as high and rocky in the neighbourhood of the harbour, which, on afterwards looking into the chart, was supposed to be somewhere about Reed Point. The native returned with the soldiers, as cheerfully and as well pleased, as if he had conducted them to the banks of the finest river in the world.

“Some severe contests among the natives took place during the month of August (1794), in and about the town of Sydney. In fact, the inhabitants still knew very little of the manners and customs of these people, notwithstanding the advantage which they possessed in the constant residence of many of them, and the desire that they showed of cultivating their friendship. At the Hawkesbury they were not so friendly; a settler there and his servant were nearly murdered in their hut by some natives from the woods, who stole upon them with such secrecy as to wound and overpower them before they could procure assistance. A few days after

this circumstance, a body of natives attacked the settlers, and carried off their clothes, provisions, and whatever else they could lay their hands on. The sufferers collected what arms they could, and, following them, seven or eight of the plunderers were killed on the spot. This mode of treating them had become absolutely necessary, from the frequency and evil effects of their visits; but whatever the settlers at the river suffered was entirely brought on them by their own misconduct; there was not a doubt but that many natives had been wantonly fired upon.

“About the latter end of January 1795 the natives adjusted some affairs of honour in a convenient spot near the brickfields. Those who lived about the south shore of Botany Bay brought with them a stranger of an extraordinary appearance and character; even his name had something uncommon in the sound, Gome-boak. He had been several days on his journey from the place where he lived, which was far southward. In height he was not more than five feet two or three inches; but by far the most muscular, square, and well-formed native that had been seen in the country. He fought well; his spears were remarkably long, and he defended himself with a shield that covered his whole body.

“The inhabitants of Sydney had the satisfaction of seeing him engage with some of their friends, and of observing that neither their persons nor reputations suffered anything in the contest. When the fight was over, on some of the gentle-

men praising to them the martial talents of this stranger, the strength and muscle of his arm, and the excellence of his sight, they admitted the praise to be just; but hinted that, with all these excellences, when opposed to them he had not gained the slightest advantage; and, unwilling to have him too highly thought of, they, with horror in their countenances, assured those with whom they talked that Gome-boak was a cannibal.

“On the 21st April, the colonial schooner returned from the Hawkesbury, bringing upwards of eleven hundred bushels of remarkably fine Indian corn from the store there. The master reported his apprehensions that the navigation of the river would be obstructed by the settlers, who continued the practice of felling the trees and rolling them into the stream. He found five feet less water at the store-wharf than when he had been there in February, owing to the dry weather which for some time past had prevailed.

“At that settlement an open war seemed about that time to have commenced between the natives and the settlers; and word was received over-land, that two of the latter had been killed by a party of the former. The natives appeared in large bodies, men, women, and children, provided with blankets and nets to carry off the corn (of which they appeared as fond as those natives who lived at Sydney), and seemed determined to take it, whenever and wherever they could meet with opportunities. In their attacks they conducted themselves with much art; but where that failed, they had recourse to violence; and on the least

appearance of resistance made use of their spears or clubs.

“To check at once, if possible, these dangerous depredators, Captain Paterson directed a party of the corps to be sent from Parramatta, with instructions to destroy as many as they could meet with of the wood tribe (Be-dia-gal); and in the hope of striking terror, to erect gibbets in different places, whereon the bodies of all that they might kill were to be hung. It was reported that several of these people were killed in consequence of this order; but none of the bodies were found (perhaps if any were killed they were carried off by their companions); some prisoners, however, were taken and sent to Sydney. Captain Paterson hoped that by detaining the prisoners, and treating them well, some good effect might result; but finding after some time that coercion, not attention, was more likely to answer his ends, he sent them back.

“On the soldiers withdrawing, the natives attacked a farm nearly opposite Richmond Hill, and put a settler and his son to death; the wife, after receiving several wounds, crawled down the bank, and concealed herself among some reeds half immersed in the river, where she remained a considerable time without assistance; being at length found, after having seen her husband and her child slaughtered before her eyes, she was taken into the hospital at Parramatta, where she recovered, though slowly, of her wounds. In consequence of this horrid circumstance, another party of the corps was sent out; and while they were there

the natives kept at a distance. This duty now became permanent; and the soldiers were distributed among the settlers for their protection."

## CAPTAIN JOHN HUNTER IN NEW SOUTH WALES

ON the 7th September, 1795, the new governor-in-chief, Captain John Hunter, arrived, and a few days afterwards entered upon his duties. He had originally come out with Governor Phillip, as captain of the *Sirius* frigate, and had gone to England in 1791. On Governor Phillip relinquishing the charge of the settlement, Captain Hunter had been chosen to succeed him, and probably no better choice could have been made than that of a man who had taken a prominent part in founding the colony, and who felt a personal interest in its success. On his return to Sydney he found that although considerable progress in material advancement had been made during his absence, and that many of the difficulties which at first beset the infant settlement had disappeared, others of almost as formidable a character had arisen in their place. The military and their immediate friends and connections had become a dominant class; they had been entrusted with the control of the government for three years, and during that period they had usurped not only the functions properly belonging to

civil authority, but had secured for themselves a monopoly of land, labour and traffic.

Almost the first act of Captain Hunter, after assuming the government, was the establishing of a small printing office. The press and types had been brought out originally by Governor Phillip, but had never been used for want of some one who understood the art of printing. A printer was, however, at last found. He was a young man of the name of Howe, a creole<sup>1</sup> of St. Christopher's in the West Indies, who had lately arrived in the colony. The press was at first employed in printing official notices only, but in the course of time the office was extended, and about eight years afterwards a small newspaper, the *Sydney Gazette*, was established, which continued, under Mr. Howe's control, to be the official organ of the government for upwards of thirty years.

Some prisoners, in 1789, had obtained permission to celebrate by a dramatic performance the King's birthday, and the timely arrival of the ship *Sirius* with provisions at a period when the settlement was in danger of starvation. The attempt was not so successful as to call for its repetition at that time. Soon after his arrival, however, Governor Hunter granted leave to several of the more decent class of convicts to erect a temporary structure to be used as a play-house. It was opened on the 16th January 1796. The opening performances were "The

<sup>1</sup> A person of pure European blood, born in the West Indies or South America.



Revenge," and "The Hotel." The rates of admission to the play-house were singular. There was little or no money in the colony at that time, and the circulatory medium most in use was rum. The price of a seat in the gallery, the most commodious and fashionable part of the house, was fixed at a shillingsworth of spirits, flour, meat, or any other article of general use.

The passion for play-going had been kept in abeyance for a long time, by the absence of what it fed on, but it broke out with great fury on the first opportunity. Every device was practised by the worst class of convicts to obtain the means of admission. One fellow killed a fine greyhound belonging to an officer, and after skinning it, succeeded in palming off its joints for kangaroo flesh, at the rate of ninepence a pound. The increase of crime was so great and so marked after the opening of the theatre, that the governor was soon obliged to issue orders for levelling the place with the ground; and that high-handed course met with the general approval of the more respectable people of all classes of the community.

In June 1796 the first coal discovered in the colony was brought to Sydney by some men who had been employed in fishing, and had taken shelter in what they described as "a bay near Port Stephens," evidently meaning the entrance to the river Hunter, afterwards called Port Hunter, or Newcastle Harbour. About the same time coal was also found at the Coal Cliff at Bulli by part of a shipwrecked crew, and the seams were traced for several miles by an officer and some

men who had been sent in search of them. The first natural product of the country ever turned to profit, as an export, was a quantity of coals consisting of forty-four tons, dug from the cliff at Newcastle, which was exchanged for some nails and old iron with the master of an American ship. The first regular export of coals was in the year 1801, when a small brig, called the *Anna Josepha*, which had been built in the colony, was freighted with colonial timber and coals and dispatched to the Cape of Good Hope. Both the coals and the timber met with a ready market there. The coals were sold at £6 a ton.

The accounts of the years 1796 and 1797 are full of stories of conflicts between the settlers and the natives, in which very little mercy appears to have been shown on either side. It is difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at anything like a correct estimate of the number of settlers killed by the blacks, but there is every reason to believe that it is scarcely a tithe of the number of the aborigines whose lives were sacrificed in return.

The natives in many of their attacks evinced great daring, and were often successful in carrying off large quantities of plunder. On several occasions they boarded at sea, in their canoes, the vessels employed in bringing grain and other produce from the Hawkesbury. In one at least of these piratical attacks they succeeded, after overpowering and killing the crew, in getting possession of the vessel and cargo. In other attempts they were beaten off with great loss, and ample vengeance was afterwards exacted. They

were believed to have been encouraged in these crimes by runaway convicts, many of whom were living with them, and who were for the most part beyond the reach of the law. Collins, in his history, gives accounts of many affrays between the settlers and the blacks, but they were most of them so similar in character that the following account of one, which took place in March 1797, will serve as a specimen of the whole :

“ The people at the Northern Farms (Kissing Point district) had been repeatedly plundered of their provisions and clothing by a large body of savages, who had also recently killed a man and a woman. Exasperated at such cruel and wanton conduct, they armed themselves, and, after pursuing them a whole night, came up with a party of more than a hundred, who, on discovering that their pursuers were armed, fled, leaving behind them a quantity of Indian corn, some musket balls and other things which they had plundered. They continued to follow, and traced them as far as the outskirts of Parramatta. Being fatigued with their march, they entered the town, and in about an hour afterwards were followed by a large body of natives, headed by Pemulwy, a riotous and troublesome savage. These were known by the settlers to be the same who had so frequently annoyed them, and they intended, if possible, to seize upon Pemulwy; who, in a great rage, threatened to spear the first man that dared to approach them, and actually did throw a spear at one of the soldiers.

The conflict now began; a musket was levelled

at the principal, which severely wounded him. Many spears were then thrown, and one man was struck in the arm, upon which the superior effect of the fire-arms was shown them, and five were instantly killed. Unpleasant as it was to the governor that the lives of so many of these people should have been taken, no other course could have been pursued with safety; for it was their custom, when they found themselves more numerous and better armed than the white people, to demand with insolence whatever they deemed proper, and, if refused, to have recourse to murder. This check, it was hoped, would have a good effect; and Pemulwy, who had received some buckshot in his head and different parts of his body, was taken extremely ill to the hospital. This savage was first known in the settlement by the murder of John M'Intire in the year 1790, since which he had been a most active enemy of the settlers, plundering them of their property, and endangering their personal safety."

The preceding instance affords an example of the frequently recurring conflicts between the settlers and the natives, and will serve to show the relative positions in which the two races stood to each other, during the first ten or twelve years after the settlement was founded. The most frequent cause of quarrel between them was the plundering of the growing maize crops by the blacks; and to such an extent was this carried on on some of the outlying farms that many of the settlers on the Hawkesbury had to abandon their lands in

1797, after they had devoted several years to the labour of clearing and cultivation. The truth is, that the fire-arms of the whites had so thinned and frightened the game on which the unfortunate natives had been accustomed to rely for food, that they were driven by starvation to prey upon the crops of the settlers; while the scarcity of animal food among the latter compelled them to adopt every means in their power to eke out their scanty rations with game and fish.

Governor Hunter being anxious to discover the truth of the rumours respecting the herd of wild cattle said to exist in the interior, dispatched a person in the direction where they were supposed to be, and the information he obtained from the blacks and the indications he saw, were sufficient to induce his excellency to head a party, in person, to set the matter finally at rest. The narrative of this journey says: "The governor set off for Parramatta, attended by a small party; and after travelling two days in a direction S.S.W. from the settlement at Prospect Hill, crossed the river named by Mr. Phillip, the Nepean; and to his great surprise and satisfaction, fell in with a very fine herd of cattle, upwards of forty in number, grazing in a pleasant and apparently fertile pasturage. The day being far advanced when he saw them, he rested for the night in the neighbourhood, hoping in the morning to be gratified with a sight of the whole herd.

"A doubt had been started of their being cattle produced from what had been brought into the country by Governor Phillip from the Cape;

and it was suggested that they might be of longer standing. The governor thought this a circumstance worth determining, and directed the attendants who were with him to endeavour to get near enough to kill a calf. This they were not able to effect; for while lying in wait for the whole herd to pass, which now consisted of upwards of sixty young and old, they were furiously set upon by a bull, which brought up the rear, and which in their own defence they were obliged to kill. This, however, answered the purpose perhaps better than a calf might have done; for he had all the marks of the Cape cattle when full grown, such as wide-spreading horns, a moderate rising or hump between his shoulders, and a short thin tail. Being at this time seven or eight and thirty miles from Parramatta, a very small quantity of the meat only could be sent in; the remainder was left to the crows and dogs of the woods, much to the regret of the governor and his party, who considered that the prisoners, particularly the sick at the hospital, had not lately received any meat either salt or fresh.

“The country where they were found grazing was remarkably pleasant to the eye; everywhere the foot trod on thick and luxurious grass; the trees were thinly scattered, and free from underwood, except in particular spots; several beautiful flats presented large ponds, covered with ducks and black swan, the margins of which were fringed with shrubs of the most delightful tints, and the ground rose from these levels into hills of easy ascent.

“The question how these cattle came hither appeared easy of solution. The few that were lost in 1788, two bulls and five cows, travelled without interruption in a western direction until they came to the banks of the Nepean. Arrived there, and finding the crossing as easy as when the governor had forded it, they came at once to a well-watered country, and amply stored with grass. From this place they had no inducement to move. They were in possession of a country equal to their support, and in which they remained undisturbed. The settlers had not till then travelled quite so far westward; and but few natives were to be found thereabouts; they were likely, therefore, to remain for years unmolested, and securely to propagate their species.

“It was a most pleasant circumstance, to have in the woods of New Holland a thriving herd of wild cattle. Many proposals were made to bring them into the settlement; but in the day of want, if these should be sacrificed, in what better condition would the colony be for having possessed a herd of cattle in the woods?—a herd, which if suffered to remain undisturbed for some years, would, like the cattle of South America, always prove a market sufficient for the inhabitants of that country; and perhaps not only for their own consumption, but for exportation. The governor saw it in this light, and determined to guard against any attempts to destroy them.”

About the middle of February 1797 a ship, called the *Sydney Cove*, while on a voyage from

India to New South Wales, was wrecked at Furneaux's Islands near Bass's Straits. Mr. G. A. Hamilton, the master, and part of the crew, remained at the place where the wreck occurred, for a period of about ten months. Mr. Clarke, the supercargo, with the chief officer and fifteen men, endeavoured to reach Sydney in the longboat, but were driven on shore somewhere to the south of Cape Howe, from whence they attempted to travel northward, and to reach the settlement by land. The distance was very great—nearly four hundred miles, and the difficulties they had to encounter of the most formidable character. They persevered manfully for a time, but at length began to drop one by one, and lost each other daily. Their number, on reaching the Illawarra district, was reduced to five.

Most of the tribes of natives they had met with before they arrived there had been friendly, but now they had the misfortune to fall in with two half-civilized black fellows from Botany Bay, the men who had endeavoured to entrap Mr. Bass and Lieutenant Flinders a short time before, when on their first voyage of discovery in a little boat called the *Tom Thumb*. These scoundrels killed the chief mate and carpenter, leaving only Mr. Clarke, one English sailor, and a lascar. They succeeded at last, after undergoing the most frightful sufferings, in reaching Wattamowlee, a little inlet on the coast about midway between Botany Bay and Wollongong, and the place where Messrs. Flinders



and Bass had found shelter some time before from the storm which threatened to destroy their tiny craft. At Wattamowlee Mr. Clarke and his companions were discovered by some fishermen, who gave them a passage to Sydney, where they arrived on the 17th April, having been two months on their perilous journey.

The governor, on learning the situation of Captain Hamilton and the remainder of the crew, dispatched in the following month a schooner called the *Francis* to their assistance. They were all at length rescued, and a considerable part of the cargo of the *Sydney Cove* recovered about ten months after her wreck.

Several successful acts of piracy were committed by prisoners in the years 1798 and 1799. In the early part of the latter year the *Venus*, laden with a quantity of provisions and stores to supply the settlements to the northward, and a very handsome brig called the *Har-rington*, from Madras, were seized and taken off. The former, when she had reached the place of her destination, after coming to an anchor, and landing the master with dispatches for the lieutenant-governor, was seized by some convicts who had been placed on board under confinement, aided by part of the crew, and was carried beyond the reach of recapture. The latter was cut out of Farm Cove, and was carried out to sea before any information was received on the subject.

The transaction was planned in a very secret manner; so that all the convicts boarded her about 12 o'clock at night; and although the vessel lay

in sight of some part of the town, and within fire of two batteries, yet nothing was discovered of the circumstance till the following morning.

Upon representation being made to Colonel Johnson, that officer ordered several boats to be manned immediately, and a party of the New South Wales Corps, with a number of inhabitants who had volunteered their services to use every means to retake the vessel, put to sea; but after rowing and sailing about for several hours, they were obliged to return without ever coming in sight of the *Harrington*. Other means were subsequently tried for the recovery of the vessel, but all to no effect; the convicts had managed their matters with such secrecy, promptitude and skill, as totally prevented every endeavour to counteract their intentions.

## JOHN BATMAN AND THE SETTLEMENT OF PORT PHILLIP

Lieutenant-Colonel Collins was sent from England in 1804 to found a penal colony on the shores of Port Phillip. He evidently found the place unsuitable, for after a trial of three months near Indented Head, he removed his party to Van Diemen's Land. In 1826 the government made another attempt to found a convict establishment at Settlement Point, near French Island, in Western Point Bay, but were compelled to abandon the project shortly afterwards. Two

of the pioneer sheep farmers to Victoria, named Hume and Hovel, rode overland from Lake George in New South Wales. They were followed by the brothers Edward and Francis Henty, who established a whaling station at Portland Bay, and took part in an expedition to Swan River, in West Australia. They formed sheep and cattle stations near the site of the present towns of Merino, Casterton and Coleraine. They were the immediate predecessors of Batman and Fawkner, and the numerous sheep farmers who followed them from Tasmania.

The country forming the hinterland of New South Wales was first opened up during the administration of Captain Macquarie, which lasted from 1809 to 1820. This enterprising governor constructed permanent buildings at Sydney and Parramatta, founded a bank, made roads and built bridges in the district, and by means of a track across the Blue Mountains, opened up the rich interior to the inhabitants of Sydney. The final defeat of Napoleon in 1815 gave the people of Great Britain leisure to think about their possessions in the Southern Seas, and in 1817 settlers began to arrive in considerable numbers, attracted by the success of Captain McArthur in producing merino wool. These first settlers found the soil, grass and climate so well adapted to their purpose that they grew rich rapidly, and were soon able to purchase their land. They were however dissatisfied with the administration of justice, which was in the hands of a judge assisted by military officers. These and difficulties connected with the exploration of the interior were settled during the governorship of Sir Richard Bourke, 1831-1837.

John Batman (1800–1840) was the founder of Victoria, which before his time formed part of the territory ruled by the governor of New South Wales. He was born at Parramatta, five years after the departure of Governor Phillip, and twelve years after the foundation of the earliest Australian colony. He settled first in Tasmania as a farmer, but returned to his native land, and in 1835 purchased about 700,000 acres from the natives, on the shores of Port Phillip. The sale was repudiated by the British government, which regarded all unoccupied land in any part of Australia as the property of the crown, and did not recognize the title of the aborigines. Batman, however, remained at Port Phillip, and commenced farming within the boundaries of the present city of Melbourne. He was followed by a number of sheep-owners, who like him had begun business in Tasmania, and who henceforth for some time carried on a most thriving trade in wool.

By 9 a.m. we were between the heads, with the tide running out, and nearly at low water; a heavy surf, and the wind light and baffling. We effected an entrance with difficulty, at a part of the bay where the width was about a mile and a quarter. We took soundings, and found the depth of water from five and a half to seven fathoms. We succeeded, however, in entering one of the finest bays, or basins of water, well sheltered, that we remember to have seen. Within the bay, the water was, compared to our late tossing in the boiling and foaming waters outside, as smooth as a mill pond; and our little

bark floated gently along, like a sleeping gull. I shall, however, take this opportunity to remark that it will be desirable to enter its mouth only at the times of the tide running in. As we were sailing down the bay, we were surprised to hear the repeated barkings of a dog, and were somewhat puzzled as to how he came there. We had just called upon P—— to account for this phenomenon, when a flock of at least one hundred wild geese rose, within a shot's distance of our vessel. They appeared of a large size, and flew before us in the direction of the port.

After sailing about twelve miles up the port, we cast anchor in a small bay, and afterwards made preparations for going on shore. In getting ready the boat for that purpose, we caught sight of another dog on the sandy beach. We made for that spot, and found it to be a native dog or dingo, which had apparently been left by the natives a day or two before our arrival. It appeared to be quite tame, and was perfectly familiar with my Sydney natives, although, with the cunning peculiar to the Australian dingo, he would not allow them to lay hands on him. After a short time, our dogs broke after and ran him down into the water, where we shot him. He proved to be a large and handsome animal, of the same character as the Australian dogs generally.

On resuming our march from the scene of the last incident, we came upon apparently quite fresh tracks of the natives, leading to a village of huts, or gunyahs, which had not

been abandoned, as we judged from sundry indications, for more than a day or two; some appeared to have been used by the natives as their marine villas, in which they had been plentifully regaling on the mussel, unio, and periwinkle, from the large number of empty shells which lay in heaps around. We passed into the country, and, at the distance of four miles, commenced travelling over land a little sandy in places but of the finest description for grazing purposes; nearly all parts of its surface covered with kangaroo and other grasses of the most nutritive character, intermixed with herbs of various kinds; the kangaroo grass, and other species, from ten to twelve inches high, of a dense growth, and green as a field of wheat.

We were perfectly pleased with the country at this part, and here changing our course found it to open around into softly undulating hills and plains, with, as before, the richest grass and verdure, so delightful to the eyes of the sheep farmer. As a relief to the landscape, the gently rising eminences were adorned with wattle, banksia, native honeysuckle, and the shea-oak, whose short, straight, stumpy butts and round heads resembled a number of pins sticking in a lady's pincushion.

On our return to the vessel, we passed over another thinly timbered and richly grassed plain, of not less than from two hundred to three hundred acres, on which rich surface a large number of kangaroos were feeding, and, but that our dogs were stiff, from being so long on

ship-board, some interesting hunts would have followed. We saw several more native huts, or gunyahs, and the marks on one tree were quite fresh, apparently cut yesterday. We continued our course down the bay, and found the country everywhere of the same richly grassed character.

We caught sight of some hills in the distance, bare of timber, although they had the appearance of being clothed with verdure to their summits. They appeared distant about six miles. I purpose paying them a visit next morning, as I anticipate being able to take from their summits a good survey of the surrounding country, more particularly that part lying in a north-west direction. My natives preferred sleeping on shore to-night, whilst Captain Harwood and myself took the shelter of the vessel. In the course of my day's excursion we have travelled at least twenty miles, and the skipper is knocked up! In the early part of the evening the wind set in again, and continued to blow hard until midnight.

May 30.—The winds of last night continued, and the vessel was tossed about considerably, owing to the absence of shelter. We hailed our Sydney natives, and directed them to go round to a point of land and meet the vessel, as a boat could not land to bring them off. At the distance of about fifteen miles, we reached the point indicated, and had no sooner anchored than we perceived my Sydney natives coming along the shore. I again landed, for the purpose of taking another inspection of the country, which we

discerned as exceedingly rich, and beautiful in the extreme; thinly timbered, richly grassed, and diversified by a few sweet valleys, and hills of small elevation and of volcanic formation. The soil was of fine, rich, oily, decomposed whinstone. Nothing could be more satisfactory, and in every point the reality far exceeded my most sanguine expectations. In these and other situations, the kangaroo and other native grasses have attained at least two feet, and thick as it could grow, capable of affording hay of the best quality. The trees were thinly scattered in a park-like form, averaging five or six to the acre.

Robinson Crusoe was never better pleased with the appearance of the first ship which arrived, and rescued him from his desolate island, than I was with the vessel which proved the means of my thus opening to view a country capable of supporting a future nation, and which, we trust, will be the means of relieving the Hobart Town country of its overstocked cattle, and the mother-country of her surplus and half-starved peasantry. Futurity must develop this prophecy! Further travelling and examination only added to my pre-conceived estimate of this extremely interesting and extensive territory; consisting of plains or downs at least twenty miles long by a width of ten miles, and the distance may have been greater, but for the interruption of hills more than ordinarily high, which broke the horizon in different directions. One of these vistas, which I have at present in view, cannot form a less area than one hundred thousand



acres. Its general character presents that of cultivated pastures for centuries past; the few trees appear as though they owed their plantation to the hand of man. All the high hills are covered with grass to their summits.

I ascended these eminences or hill-summits, from which the view was most satisfactory. The country on either hand presented the same continuation of rich pastoral plains, apparently of greater extent than those already mentioned. The bay up which we sailed to-day, and where we cast anchor, varied in depth from two and a half to six fathoms, and to my great joy I discovered the fires of the natives, or aboriginal inhabitants of this marvellously fertile country, and felt delighted beyond expression that the task of its discovery should have devolved upon myself. I intend going ashore to-morrow morning to the camp of the natives, and, if possible, shall establish a friendly intercourse with them, in order to effect a treaty for the purchase of a large portion of their fertile and hitherto useless territory.

May 31.—Sunday.—The vessel lay last night in three fathoms of water, in a fine little bay, to which I gave the name of Gellibrand's Harbour, in honour of — Gellibrand, Esq., late attorney-general, of Hobart Town.

As soon as the day broke, we landed for the purpose of carrying out our object with the aborigines. We had not travelled more than a mile and a half when we caught sight of the smoke arising from the fires of several large

gunyahs or huts. My Sydney natives immediately stripped off their clothes, and introduced themselves, *pura naturabilis*, to the inhabitants of the gunyahs; at least they intended to have so done, but on reaching the little village, they discovered that the sable tenants had departed that morning. My natives forthwith beat for their trail, and having found it, we commenced to follow, and continued on the track for about ten miles, when one of my natives caught sight of a black at the distance of a mile. Having made a sign to us, we again formed into Indian file, and marched after him until we came up to the black he had seen, who proved to be an old and crippled woman, having no toes on one foot. About a mile ahead we saw the main body of the tribe whom we had followed, and overtook them about 1 p.m.

My Sydney natives and their new companions, by a sort of freemasonry, or from a similarity of language, appeared to perfectly understand each other, and a friendly footing was at once established, which augured well for the accomplishment of my projects.

A corroborree<sup>1</sup> with song was got up in quick time, in which both tribes joined, to my great delight. The company was composed entirely of women, twenty-four in number, each having a child at her back, excepting one who was young and very good-looking. They informed us that the male members of their tribe had gone up the river. With this interesting group of females

<sup>1</sup> Conference.

were four native dogs or dingoes, and independent of infant burdens, they each had a net or basket hung around their shoulders. The weight of some of their loads could not have been less than sixty or seventy pounds; these loads were so large as to form a hump behind, on which their children rested. Each had, besides, two or three baskets of their own manufacture, containing nets, stone tomahawks, bones, crystals, etc. In one of the bags, which I took the trouble to examine, I found a piece of the tire of a cart-wheel, with the remains of two nail holes. This piece of iron was ground down to a sharp edge, and fixed in a piece of wood for a handle; they used it for the purpose of cutting, as a tomahawk; with this were several pieces of iron hoop, which they had likewise ground to a sharp edge, and used as substitutes for knives. Several large wooden vessels, of rude construction, for the purpose of holding water, were also among their utensils, and in one of them was some water, of a bad quality.

They very willingly came back with us to where I had a number of blankets, glass beads, looking-glasses, sweet sugar apples, and handkerchiefs; and I distributed amongst them eight pairs of blankets, thirty handkerchiefs, one tomahawk, eighteen necklaces of beads, six pounds of sugar, twelve looking-glasses, and a quantity of apples. They appeared to be very much pleased with the presents, and shortly after receiving them took their departure. I had arranged that we were to meet again to-morrow.

The young woman, of whom I have written, gave me a very handsome basket, of her own making; some of the other women also presented me with two baskets, and several spears; all of which I took with me on board.

I have this day travelled over at least fifteen miles of country, all of the same good character of open plains, several of which, seen from a neighbouring hill, could not be less than twenty miles square. In the course of the journey I ascended a sugar-loaf hill, which was richly grassed to the top. This hill I dedicated to the honour of J. T. Collicott, Esq., postmaster-general, and I hope and trust that, should this magnificent country eventually be settled upon, this hill may in future be allowed to retain the name of Mount Collicott. I never could have imagined it possible that so fine a country existed on the face of the globe—gentle hills, plains, and downs, on which five thousand sheep might have been allowed to feed with little trouble to the shepherd. I cannot, however, shut my eyes to the fact that, fine as the land undoubtedly is, from what I have seen yet of it, there is a great deficiency of water, although I have no doubt whatever that water might be easily obtained by digging.

I had forgotten to record that, during our conference this morning with the aborigines, they all expressed great alarm at the report of a gun, falling spontaneously with their faces to the ground; they had evidently never heard the report of a gun before. All the children wore

a good-looking and healthy appearance. We travelled this day, in going and returning, at least thirty miles, and in the course of our journey observed a number of the bustard or native turkey; but they were too shy to allow us to approach within shooting distance.

June 1.—We left the vessel this morning at daybreak, being most anxious to resume our rambles over a country possessing so many interesting features, and facilities so entirely congenial to the ripening of my intentions. We travelled round the bay to examine some plains and low hills at a distance. After crossing the neck of land, we fell in with a small river or creek, which we were obliged to follow up, as we were unable to cross it; indeed, I had rather a desire to follow it up, as I anticipated finding fresh water at its head: we followed the course of the creek for ten miles, when we saw a great many duck and teal. The creek here was from fifty to sixty yards wide. We passed many dams of stones across the creek, made by the natives for the purpose of catching fish during the summer months. These dams were from four to five feet high, and excellently contrived. Three or four of these stone walls were built in succession, with floodgates formed of sticks and bushes. We found at least a dozen of these dams or weirs in different parts of the creek.

It was also on the margin of this stream where we discovered the remains and bones of an animal unknown to us. I cannot describe it, but I counted twenty-four joints in the

vertebræ or backbone; and as each separate joint averaged at least three inches, the animal must consequently have been upwards of six feet in length; and we judged that a considerable time must have elapsed since its death, as many of the bones were partly burned. It was quite possible that there may have been originally more bones in the back than those enumerated. I have brought on board part of the head, thigh-bones, and some part of the back, for learned gentlemen to study over on my return to Van Diemen's Land. This skeleton was discovered by us in the vicinity of one of the native fishing places.

We continued our journey up the stream, until it assumed the character of a chain of ponds, where the water was slightly brackish; the further we proceeded the better the water became; at length we reached a very large, deep pond, where the water was excellent, and we here shot two teal. The diameter of this pond was at least one hundred and fifty yards; and finding it situated in the heart of a tract of good country, of unknown extent, was an additional source of satisfaction to us. We here camped and took dinner, after which we ascended a chain of well-defined hills, but of no great elevation, and to reach which we travelled through the same fine, open country for five miles. Scarcely a tree was observed upon the surface of the plain; the stems of the largest did not offer a greater diameter than eight inches, and in some places there was not a solitary bush on an area of five hundred acres, the whole of

the soil being of a light nature, dark in colour, with kangaroo grass.

We ascended the hills I have already mentioned, in the hope of catching a glimpse of the country in a S.S.W. direction, and found it to be of the same open and extensive character, far as the eye could reach, viz. plains of good soil, covered with grass, well adapted for grazing and agricultural purposes, and all ready for the plough. In casting our eye in the opposite direction, namely N.N.E., the same good country met our view, only bounded by the horizon. Perhaps the principal drawback that will be felt, should these plains be eventually occupied, will be the want of firewood, and timber for farming and other uses. We have not yet met with timber fit for the saw or splitting. Brush yards might be made for sheep or cattle. A gig or carriage might be safely drawn over these plains, without the possibility of being upset, as easily as on a turnpike road.

June 2.—My Sydney natives came on board this morning for the purpose of assisting in packing up, and otherwise making preparations for our contemplated expedition into the interior. As it continued to rain heavily, and a heavy bank of fog prevented our seeing any distance, I proposed, rather than lose time, to go with the vessel to the river, and from thence take my departure for the bush. We made the river by 8 p.m., and observed that the whole of the coast at the head of the bay was clear of timber, and a constant plain covered with grass.

Near the head of the river, on the point, was a plantation of shea-oak. We endeavoured to sail up the river, but found the water not more than a fathom deep. I went on shore this evening; the country is covered with kangaroo grass, and thinly timbered with such trees as are before mentioned. I saw large numbers of pelicans, swans, ducks, teal, and other water-fowl; and the borders of the bay abounded in quail. There appeared to be two kinds of this bird, one of a dark and the other of a light colour, the former being twice the size of the latter. To-morrow, weather permitting, I intend taking my departure up the river.

June 8.—Everything being in readiness, we left the vessel about 9 a.m., and proceeded in a boat up the river for about five miles, taking soundings as we went, and found from seven to nine feet of water in the channel. I now landed and joined the party on shore, who had walked some seven miles on a well-grassed and thinly oak-timbered country; four miles further, I came upon the banks of the river, which appeared open on both sides, well grassed, and deeper than at the place where I landed from the boat. In travelling further up we passed over several rich flats, about a mile wide, by two or three miles long, destitute of trees, and covered knee-deep with grass, from which hundreds of tons of good hay might be made. The land was of the best description, equal to anything in the world, nor does it appear subject to being flooded.

For twenty-six miles we continued following



the course of this river, and found on both sides of it, as far as the eye could stretch, fine open plains, with a few trees of the oak species; one striking object was the absence of fresh water all throughout this distance. Just before sundown, as we were preparing to camp on the bank of the river, I caught sight of a damp place, and, on sending one of my men, Gumm, to make a hole with a stick to the depth of two feet, we had in the course of an hour a plentiful supply of good water. By 10 p.m. the water was running over the top of the hole; I am certain the same might be done in most places, with a like result. The river varied in width from one hundred to sixty yards; at this place it is but forty yards wide, and is becoming narrower as we go up. I have named this place Gumm's Well. In the course of the journey to-day we saw several parrots, kangaroos, and a native dog or dingo.

We continued travelling over the plains, and in eight miles again made the river, which was now perfectly fresh. We all took a hearty drink. Having crossed the river, we travelled over the richest land I had ever seen in my life; marsh mallows, with leaves as large as those of the cabbage tribe, and as high as my head. We re-crossed at a native ford, and we observed on a wattle tree, which they had been stripping of the bark, scratches or marks of figures, representing blacks in the act of fighting. These figures I copied as nearly as I was able.

We ascended a small eminence where the grass reached our knees, and followed the course

of the river for a few miles; we camped for the night in a snug corner of land on its banks, which I called Gumm's Corner. After taking a refreshing pot of tea and something to eat, I started with four of my natives, and took a circuit of thirteen miles up the river, which was here running in a northerly direction. The whole of the land was of excellent warm hill and valley, with grass three feet high in places where it had not been burnt by the natives. Where it had been burnt by these people, the young blades are from ten to twelve inches high, affording fine feed for the kangaroos and other animals. In the course of the evening we heard a dog howl. The weather has been very fine and warm. We have travelled about thirty miles to-day.

June 5.—I left the river this morning, and journeyed in a W.N.W. course, as I wished to cross over some large plains in that direction. We saw a large flock of emus, but too distant for the dogs to overtake them. Some wild geese were also seen. In the course of this journey we crossed three running streams of fresh water, with steep banks, covered with grass to the margin of the water. In some parts of these creeks the water did not run, but we observed large and deep ponds in the heads of the three creeks I crossed; and I am inclined to believe that they are the same waters, but running in different directions until reaching the river. This country is consequently well watered, the only thing apparently wanting being timber. Pursuing our course, we passed through an open forest two miles in length,

composed of oak, with about ten of those trees to the acre, and the stems or butts about a foot in circumference, their heads forming good shelter for stock, with excellently grassed surface. The last creek I have named Eliza's Creek, as a small token of regard for my absent, affectionate wife.

About noon we ascended a hill, and from thence took a bird's-eye view of the country; for a distance of forty miles on every hand, the same open, grazing-like land is everywhere seen. The hill on which I am now sitting, under one of the few shea-oaks which are scattered over its surface, is distant fifty miles from the bay, and all around are rich open plains, with trees, gently rising hills, and valleys of the best description of soil. We have just discovered smoke arising from the fires of the natives in an easterly direction, and have commenced to follow in that course. After accomplishing sixteen miles over rich plains, we crossed another fresh-water creek, just at its point of junction with one running from the N.N.E. We again renewed our journey over plains, until reaching a small forest of box gum trees, which formed a belt of about two miles. Here, then, we have, at length, found timber suitable for splitting or sawing, and the great and only desideratum supplied.

In this forest, which was well grassed, we caught one of the largest kangaroos I have ever seen, measuring nine feet. This *was* a BOOMER. From the box and oak forest, we came upon beautiful open plains, with the usual interruptions of gently rising eminences, on which grew oak, black

wood, and wattle trees, with grass up to our waists, through which walking was both painful and tedious. We came eventually to a small lovely valley, where, to our great delight, was a dense tea-tree shrub, which we knew to be the surest indication of good water in its neighbourhood, and it soon led us to the upper end or head of a well of the purest water, the current of which took a south-east course. It being, by this time, sunset, we camped for the night. We were hungry, and enjoyed a pot of tea and other viands, to which our late discovery gave an additional zest.

June 6.—During the greater part of last night the wind was very high, accompanied with a few showers of rain. We made an early breakfast, and resumed our journey, in order to reach the camp of the blacks, the smoke of whose fires we had seen yesterday. We travelled over land equal to any that we had seen, a deep black diluvium, with grass three or four feet high, and thinly timbered. After travelling eight miles, we struck the trail of the natives, which, in a short time, led us to a branch of the tribe, consisting of one chief, his wife, and three children—fine, plump, chubby, healthy-looking urchins they were. To this distinguished royal chieftain of the prairies I gave one pair of blankets, handkerchiefs, beads, and three pocket-knives; upon the receipt of these presents he undertook the part of guide. We crossed a fresh-water creek, with good land on either bank. Our new guide informed us that he would take us to his

tribe, at the same time naming many of their chiefs.

After travelling about eight miles, we were surprised to hear a number of voices calling after us, and on looking round encountered six men, armed with spears fixed in their wommeras.<sup>1</sup> We stopped, and they at once threw aside their spears, and came up to us in the most friendly manner possible. We all shook hands, and I gave them knives, tomahawks, etc., whereupon they took the lead, and brought us back about a mile, to where we found huts or gunyahs, and a number of women and children. We sat down in the midst of these sooty and sable aboriginal children of Australia; amongst whom, we ascertained, were eight chiefs belonging to the country near Port Phillip, over which we had travelled and with which we had so much reason to be pleased. The three principal chiefs were brothers. Two of them were fully six feet high, and tolerably good looking; the third was not so tall, but much stouter than the others. The other five chiefs were equally fine men.

And a question, to myself, here arises, and the answer as speedily follows, viz. now is the time for entering into and effecting a purchase of their land. A full explanation, that my object in visiting their shore was to purchase their land, they appeared to understand; and the following negotiation or agreement was immediately entered into. I purchased two large blocks or tracts of land,

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* Throwing-stick, by the aid of which they hurled their spears to a great distance. Spelt also *woomera*.

about six hundred thousand acres, more or less, and in consideration therefor I gave them blankets, knives, looking-glasses, tomahawks, beads, scissors, flour, etc.; and I also further agreed to pay them a tribute, or rent, yearly. The parchment or deed was signed this afternoon by the eight chiefs, each of them, at the same time, handing me a portion of the soil: thus giving me full possession of the tracts of land I had purchased.

This most extraordinary sale and purchase took place by the side of a lovely stream of water, from whence my land commenced. A tree was here marked in four different ways, to define the corner boundaries. Good land, to any extent, either for stock or tillage, with good water, was here in abundance, ready for sheep, cattle, or the plough. The timber was shea-oak, dwarf-gum, and wattle.

Our negotiation was terminated by my Sydney natives giving our newly-acquired friends a grand corroborree at night, much to their delight. Upon a close observation of the domestic habits of these people, we discerned that each chief had two wives and several children. The group consisted altogether of forty-five, men, women, and children.

June 7.—Sunday.—I awoke this morning with the agreeable consciousness of my being able, like Alexander Selkirk, of school-boy memory, to say—

“I am monarch of all I survey;  
My right there is none to dispute.”

With a view, however, of securing this right permanently, I busied myself in drawing up triplicates of the deeds of the land I had purchased, and in delivering over to the natives more property. This was done on the banks of the lovely little creek, which I have named Batman's Creek, as a memento of the novel and interesting transaction occurring on its banks. After the purchase and payment, at the conclusion of the preliminaries, I had made preparation for departing, when two of the principal chiefs approached and laid their royal mantles at my feet, begging my acceptance of them. Upon my acquiescing, the gifts were placed around my neck and over my shoulders, by the noble donors, who seemed much pleased at their share in the transaction, and begged of me to walk a pace or two in their (now my) princely vestments. I asked them to accompany me to the vessel, to which request I received a rather feeling reply, by their pointing first to their children, and next to their own naked feet, importing that they could not walk so fast as ourselves, but would come down in a few days.

In the course of the late transaction I had no difficulty in discovering their sacred and private mark, so important in all their transactions, and universally respected. I obtained a knowledge of this mark by means of one of my Sydney natives, Bungit, who, going behind a tree, out of sight of the females, made the Sydney aboriginal mark. I afterwards took two others of my natives, and the principal chief of Port Phillip, to whom I showed the mark on the tree,

which he instantly recognized, and pointed also to the knocking out of the front tooth. This mark is always made simultaneously with the loss or abstraction of the tooth. I requested the chief, through the interpretation of my Sydney natives, to give the imprint of his mark. After a few minutes' hesitation, he took a tomahawk and did as he was desired on the bark of a tree. A copy of this mark is attached to the deed, as the signature and seal of their country.

About 10 a.m. I took my departure from these interesting people. The principal chief could not be less than six feet four inches high, and his proportions were gigantic; his brother six feet two inches, also a fine man. I re-crossed Batman's creek, and travelled over thinly-timbered country of box, gum, wattle, and shea-oak, with grass three or four feet high. Travelling twelve miles down one of my side lines, in a south-west direction, we came upon another creek of good pure water, running through a most romantic valley. I named it Lucy's Creek, in token of affection to one of my daughters; and the valley, Maria's Valley, after my eldest daughter. This valley and creek ran for many miles through land of the richest description. We crossed more plains or grazing land, and came subsequently upon a thinly-timbered forest of gum, wattle, and oak. Here, for the first time, the land became sandy, with a little gravel. The grass was ten inches high, and resembled a field of wheat. We have not seen the slightest appearance of frost.



After leaving this forest, we came upon the river I had gone up a few days before. Intending to come down on the opposite side and hail the vessel, I crossed, on the banks of the river, a large marsh, one mile and a half broad, by three or four long, of the richest diluvium; not a tree was to be seen. Upon the borders of this extensive marsh or swamp we disturbed large flocks of quails. In one flock the birds were so numerous as to form a dense cloud. I shot two very large ones. At the upper part of this swamp is an extensive lagoon, at least a mile across; its surface was covered with swans, ducks, geese, and other aquatic fowl. Having crossed this marsh, we passed through a dense tea-tree scrub, very high, expecting to make the vessel in the course of an hour or two, but to our great surprise, when we got through we found ourselves on the banks of a much larger river than the one we had originally gone up. As it was now near sundown, and at least two days would be required to head the river, I decided upon allowing two of my Sydney natives to swim across it, and go to the vessel, distant about seven miles, to fetch the boat.

Bullet and Bungit started on this enterprise, and returned in about three hours from the time of their departure. Their return with the boat was most opportune, as we had got on the point of junction of the two rivers, where the tide had set in, and was already up to my ankles. I first dispatched the party with the dogs in the boat to the opposite bank, and, on the

return of the boat, myself and old Bull, who had cut his foot, went in first-rate style to the vessel. I hope my travelling on foot will terminate, at least for some time. I had now accomplished a most arduous undertaking, and, in order to secure the fruits of my exertions, I intend leaving Gumm, Dodds, Thompson, and three of my Sydney natives—Bungit, Bullet, and Old Bull—as overseers and bailiffs of my newly acquired territory, and of the possession of which nothing short of a premature disclosure of my discovery on the part of my companions can possibly deprive me. These people I intend leaving at Indented Heads, as my head dépôt, with a supply of necessaries for at least three months. The chiefs of the Port Phillip tribes made me a present of three stone tomahawks, some spears, wommeras, boomerangs, and other weapons of warfare.

June 8.—This morning the winds set in foul for Indented Heads, and having made several attempts to get out of the river, we gave it up as hopeless. We went in a boat up the large river coming from the east, and, after examinations six miles up, I was pleased to find the water quite fresh and very deep: this will be the place for the future village.

June 9.—We made a fair start this morning; and are now, with a light wind, under weigh for Indented Heads. We reached the bay early in the afternoon, and commenced landing goods as expeditiously as possible, the bay being rough and the wind increasing in violence. We have

succeeded, however, in landing all the goods. I selected a spot where I wished Gumm to commence the garden, house, and other appurtenances. All my Sydney natives being desirous of permission to remain here, it was determined that Pigeon and Joe, the marine, should also remain in addition to the other natives, this making a total of eight individuals; three whites, namely, Gumm, Dodds, and Thompson; and of natives five: Pigeon, Joe the marine, Bungit, Bullet, and Old Bull, for whom we have left a plentiful supply of everything to last for three months or more. I left a large quantity of potatoes for planting, and a great variety of garden seeds, stones and pips of fruits, with apples and oranges. I also left the six dogs. To Gumm I gave written authority to warn off all persons found trespassing on the land I had purchased from the natives; and everything being now perfectly arranged and understood, we shook hands with all, and took a friendly farewell. We sailed for the Heads with a fair wind, which we cleared by 8 p.m.

June 10.—We made a good run last night, about eighty miles, and by midnight were within sight of the coast of Van Diemen's Land.

June 11.—Got into George Town Heads at 6 a.m., with a fair wind up the river, and arrived at Launceston this evening. I lost no time in reaching my own house, where I was kindly and affectionately greeted; and, in the bosom of my family, I soon lost all sight of my past wandering.

## THE STORY OF WILLIAM BUCKLEY

THE reader's attention must now be directed to an episode in the history of the Port Phillip settlement, which increases in interest with every year of the growth of Victoria, and must ever form a romantic retrospect for its busy population.

During the space of more than a generation, one of our countrymen had been wandering with the aborigines in the vicinities of Port Phillip, and, after thirty-two years, presented himself to Batman's party at Indented Head. His name was William Buckley. He had been one of the prisoners under charge of Collins, and had effected his escape into the bush prior to Collins's departure. He had, doubtless, been long forgotten when he reappeared in the year 1835, with the unwonted prestige of such remarkable antecedents. He seems to have all but despaired of again seeing his countrymen, and had lost all reckoning of time's long roll since he and they had parted company. The marks of age and infirmity upon himself warned him that many years had passed away, and latterly he had scarce any other hope than to live and die amongst the savage aborigines.

Buckley was a soldier, and having committed some minor offence, received a summary sentence, the nature or merits of which, he says, he never understood further than that the affair was in

consonance with the procedure generally in what he calls those "high hand days" with poor soldiers and sailors. The design of the Government of forming a new penal settlement on the shores of the newly-discovered Port Phillip, came opportunely to Buckley, as he was of a rather restless disposition. He was enrolled as one of the prisoners, but had the position of servant to the governor.

He tells us that the two vessels appointed for the convicts, the *Calcutta* and the *Ocean*, left England on the 24th April, 1803, and entered Port Phillip, the *Ocean* on the 7th, and the *Calcutta* on the 9th October following. The ships turned eastwards after entering the harbour, in the direction of Arthur Seat, near which they came to anchor, the whole party landing and forming a settlement.

Buckley's unsettled disposition gave him a longing for liberty. With three other prisoners he projected a plan of escape. As the fugitives passed out from the camp bounds, one of them was shot by the sentry on duty; the others, including Buckley, disappeared into the unknown wilderness. Amongst the three who were now at large, they mustered some rations, a gun, several tin pots, and a kettle. The last commodity was found rather heavy, and was, therefore, thrown away at the end of the first day's journey—a circumstance not without interest, as the kettle was again found many years after by a party of colonists while clearing ground for agricultural purposes.

The party directed their course along the east coast of Port Phillip. The day of their flight was the 27th December, the middle of the southern summer. Toiling over a dreary solitude they seem to have crossed the river Yarra, rounded the head of the harbour, and traversed the plains westward to the Yowang Hills, or Station Peak range of Flinders. From thence, impelled by hunger, they descended to the sea-coast of Geelong Harbour, in the hope of procuring at least a supply of shellfish. With precarious supplies of this kind they passed round to Indented Head, and from Swan Island took a view of the ship *Calcutta*, as she lay at anchor on the opposite side of the harbour. Worn out with fatigue and starvation, all the party would fain at that time have returned to their bondage, and accordingly they made repeated but vain attempts to attract the notice of those on board the ship.

Once, indeed, it seemed as though they had been seen, and their signals responded to, for a boat had started from the *Calcutta* in their direction; but after it had accomplished half the distance across the bay, it turned back. Buckley's two companions now decided to attempt a return by the way they had come. Buckley himself, however, was not to be persuaded to this course. At once cherishing liberty, and dreading punishment, he preferred remaining where he was, not, however, without a pang of grief as he reflected on his solitary position. His companions left him, but were never again seen, and must have

either perished from hunger, or been killed by the natives.

Buckley, thus left alone, continued to follow the sea-coast, which took him in a southerly direction. His subsistence was almost solely on shell-fish, and as he was not always able to strike a light and enjoy a fire, he was often compelled to eat his food raw. He also suffered severely from the want of fresh water to drink. His wanderings at length brought him to a part of the coast where a stream of fresh water entered the sea. Here, perched upon a rock, he erected a hut, and having tolerable supplies of fish and shellfish, he seems to have felt himself, comparatively speaking, well off. This stream, as he afterwards learned, was called by the natives the Karaaf. The place is still pointed out, about three miles to the westward of the present delightful watering-place of Queenscliffe, the Brighton of Victoria. Thus passed Buckley's first summer, shortly after which he was seen and taken possession of by a tribe of the natives.

In his new position he appears to have been treated with some consideration. These, as well as other Australian natives, had a superstitious belief that white people are persons of their own race who have come to life again after death. If such resuscitated persons are deemed to be their own friends, the tribe will treat them well. Buckley came upon the scene opportunely in this respect. A chief of the tribe with which he afterwards lived had died about the time Buckley was spending his first summer of wild

independence near the Port Phillip Heads, and had been buried near Buckley's rude domicile. A piece of a native spear had been left to mark the grave. Buckley had seen and appropriated this fragment, and as he carried it in his hand, when first seen by the tribe, they joyfully hailed him as no other than their deceased chief himself come again to life. In accordance with this happy prepossession, Buckley found he was always well cared for. He often saw himself indeed to be the subject of very ardent and earnest discussion; and on the occasion of the frequent tribal battles he was carefully secluded among the females, so as to be out of harm's way.

Buckley, as he adhered to one tribe, gradually acquired their language, a circumstance that greatly pleased his native associates. Next he ventures to take a native wife, who, however, leaves him again after a season. At length, growing weary and disgusted, as he states, with the constant spectacle of strife and bloodshed, he retires for a time to his former solitude on the coast at the mouth of the Karaaf. While here in tolerable comfort, a young native female of the tribe he had left walks into his quarters, and, after the aboriginal fashion, sits down as his wife. He is too loyal an Australian to forbid the short and summary banns, and Mrs. Buckley and he seem to get on very amicably in the world for another interval of time, when she too leaves him like the previous partner. Subsequently he himself is induced to rejoin the tribe. They



had come down to see him at his place of abode, and he delighted them all by a method he had contrived of catching great numbers of fish.

Thus days, and months, and years rolled over. Buckley had lost all accurate note of time, but he saw that those whom he remembered as young native children had grown up to manhood, and he could thus infer that a long interval must have passed away. It is rather remarkable that more than once in this interval vessels with white people on board had appeared within the Port Phillip waters. Buckley says he longed to rejoin his people and the civilized world, and would fain have communicated with these casual and unknown visitors, but on each occasion he was disappointed. One of these vessels, while anchored off Indented Head, sent a party ashore, who, as the natives reported, buried something in the ground and then re-embarked. Buckley, hearing of this incident, and supposing that possibly something of a useful character might have been left concealed, repaired to the spot; but, on removing the earth, he ascertained that the object was the dead body of a white man.

We may suppose these visitors to have been whaling parties either from Sydney or Van Diemen's Land; or possibly, in one or two instances, escaped convicts from one or other of these places. These colonies, which, at the time of our wanderer's escape from the *Calcutta*, had enjoyed but a brief existence, were now, after the many years of Buckley's seclusion, advancing to a very noticeable importance. Van Diemen's

Land indeed had been founded only in the year of Buckley's absconding. During this interval of Buckley's adventures, the island had been traversed and settled from south to north; and now at length the colonists sought, as it were, to recross the straits, and appropriate for the use of their increasing flocks those grassy plains and open forest lands that Buckley, hitherto their solitary white occupant, had so often traversed.

The turning point in this long career at last arrives. One day two young natives are seen by Buckley and the tribe running up from the marshes near the coast, each of them waving a coloured handkerchief from the end of his spear. White men are once more at hand. The lads report that they have seen three white people and six blacks, who had all landed from a "Koorong" or ship off the coast of Indented Head, but that the ship had afterwards left them, and sailed again out of the bay. Buckley, enjoying the hope of soon seeing his countrymen, prepares to set out the following day.

Meanwhile, however, he is alarmed to hear of a plan among the natives to murder all these new-comers, that they may get possession of all the good things they have brought with them. For this purpose they were to invite a neighbouring tribe to give them assistance; while as to Buckley, seeing he had long been regarded as one of themselves, he too is expected, as matter of course, to aid the common cause. He, however, resolves to counteract these nefarious schemes, and setting off in the direction indicated

by the youths, he arrives at the white people's encampment on the following day. This was the 12th of July 1885.

But now, as he approaches the spot, as he hears the noise of the white man's industry, and soon after can distinguish the features of his countrymen, and when on the eve of realizing an event so long wished for, new and strong emotions seize him. What is he to say or do, for he cannot recall a word of his native speech? And again the recollection comes back upon him, after more than a generation of years, that he is still a prisoner. With his restless turn of mind, and his long wandering habits, he dreads above all things restraints on his personal freedom, and in the simplicity of his mind he imagines that he would still be seized by the government, and shut up as a runaway convict. Uncertain how to act, he sits down on a spot near to where the white people are at work, and with his bundle of native implements collected between his knees, gazes at what is going on, with the look of one who seems to be either half stupid or half indifferent.

Some natives who had gathered together near the colonists, first perceived Buckley, and pointed him out to his countrymen. The latter, on seeing him, were nearly as perplexed, although in a different way, as Buckley himself. They beheld a figure of extraordinary size, for he was six feet five inches high, while his light brown hue, as he appeared naked before them, showed plainly that he was no native Australian. Strangely



BUCKLEY'S RETURN TO CIVILISATION



fell the long-forgotten words of his native tongue upon his ear. At first he seemed to have no apprehension of what was said to him, and could only attempt, slowly and with difficulty, to repeat each word. One of the party, in pronouncing the word "bread," and accompanying the sound with a present of a substantial slice, seems to have produced somewhat of a talismanic effect in the vivid recall of old times and associations. He was not long in understanding other things said to him, or in making himself in turn understood. Having lost all note of time, he had a vague idea that twenty years must have elapsed since he left his convict party in 1803. He was, therefore, much surprised to learn that many more seasons had gone over his head, and that it was now already the year 1835.

His new friends were busy pitching their camp upon the elevated part of the projecting land of Indented Head. Batman, their leader, after selecting the spot, and making his grand purchase of territory, had left them in charge, with instructions to prepare a homestead against his return with his family. It was in the month of July, the winter of Australia, and it was in cold and tempestuous weather, as Buckley tells us, that he made his journey to the place. It was altogether a memorable occasion—a settlement so small in its beginning, so rapid in its course, and so great in its future.

Buckley's efforts were now for a time directed to the means of keeping the peace between his old and his new associates. At first he per-

suaded the natives to defer their intended attack upon the intruders, suggesting that if they waited until the ship returned, there would be a vast addition to the expected plunder. Afterwards, by the promise of considerable presents, and by an occasional gift of biscuit, blankets, and other necessaries, he succeeds in changing their purpose. No doubt he has somewhat magnified the importance of the whole affair, and perhaps, too, the accounts of the strifes and turbulences of the natives generally.

Buckley, however, made himself useful as an interpreter and peacemaker between the colonists and the aborigines. In this capacity he entered Batman's service upon the return of the latter from Launceston with his family to settle at Indented Head; and he subsequently followed his master to the banks of the Yarra, where the party settled upon the slope of the little green hill at the western extremity of Melbourne. Here poor Buckley seems to have got gradually into such a hot-bed of annoyances—the cares and troubles, the envyings and jealousies ineradicable from civilized life—that we may believe he almost longed to be back again to his undisturbed wigwam at the Karaaf, or to his native tribe, where he was tended well-nigh with the honours of a queen bee. He joyfully, however, records one pleasant fact of these days, which is that he received a free pardon, and was no longer in danger as a runaway or a convict. He tells us that Mr. Wedge, one of Batman's party, brought him the document elevating him to the

position of a free man, given under the hand of the then lieutenant-governor of Van Diemen's Land, Sir George Arthur, and dated the 25th August 1835, almost thirty-two years after he had left the convict settlement.

Let us still for a short space follow Buckley's fortunes. In so doing we catch a glimpse of the early state of the new settlement. From Batman's service our hero was promoted to be a constable, and he had the additional satisfaction to hail, in his new master, an old fellow-soldier, an officer of Buckley's own regiment. This officer was Captain Lonsdale, who arrived in the year 1836, accredited from the authorities at Sydney to take charge of the young settlement.

But Buckley seems to have soon become restive in this position, and this, too, notwithstanding, as he mentions with some triumph, that he succeeded in establishing a rise of pay of £10 a year, namely, from £50 a year, with rations, to £60. He found rebuffs and disagreeables at every turn. Not the least among these were caused by the troubles and misunderstandings with the natives. Buckley no doubt aimed to be of consequence in this direction, by way of revenging his dignity in finding himself behind the age in other respects. As he would appropriate all guidance in native matters, so when harmony did not always or immediately result, poor Buckley came in for all the blame, and was plentifully accused of indifference or double-dealing. Batman took his part in these disputes; but as the two chiefs of the settlement were at



incurable feud, and now more especially, since they had settled close to one another, whenever Batman befriended, Fawkner was sure to oppose; so that Buckley, completely worried out of his peace and comfort between the two hostile parties, bethought himself of making off for a quieter home.

One great cause of his distress, and it was a most legitimate and creditable cause, was the mutual illwill and misunderstanding that were daily extending between the colonists and the natives. The former, pouring in one after another with their flocks, rushed away with hot haste into the interior, anxious to secure a share of the fine pastures lying still unoccupied, and ready at Nature's hand for immediate use. It was Buckley's earnest wish that the poor natives, whose territories were thus summarily disposed of over their heads, should be approached with consideration on the subject, and with a patient effort to gain their consent and good will; and he thought that he might himself have been successful in dealing with them. But as all such preliminaries seemed mere waste of time to our eager and competing colonists, there was a lamentable result between them and the natives in constant mutual distrust, frequent hostilities, and repeated atrocities on either side. Many of the poor natives were shot down, as though little better than so much game; and we fear too that there were many more such cases than were ever heard of, or made the subject of any inquiry.

At length Buckley made up his mind to leave

Port Phillip, for he was thoroughly wearied of the life he had latterly been leading. He had seen the little colony, however, fairly started on the road to greatness. Sir Richard Bourke, the governor of New South Wales, had visited it in the year 1837, and had given his sanction to the selection and naming of Melbourne and Geelong. As to those spacious solitudes that had so long been familiar to him, their day was rapidly passing away, and now he bade final adieu to the changed and busy scenes which they presented. He directed his steps to Hobart Town, where he received employment for a time from the Van Diemen's Land government, and where too he married a wife—not this time, however, a native one. When the infirmities of age came upon him that government allowed him a pension, a sadly poor one, when we regard his interesting antecedents, of £12 a year, to which, however, £40 was afterwards added by the government at Melbourne, when the Port Phillip district was separated from New South Wales, and became the colony of Victoria.

The author met Buckley in the streets of Hobart Town in the year 1852, seventeen years after he had emerged from his barbarous solitude. He was then seventy-two years of age, and looking marvellously well, particularly for one of his rough experiences. He was a man of few words and apparently still fewer ideas, but of remarkable appearance from his great stature, a quality that had given him consideration with the natives, and was thus probably the cause of preserving

his life amongst them. He died at Hobart Town, on the 2nd of February 1856. He had lived to see the greatness of the land of his many wanderings, as he survived for several years the event of the gold discovery; and we can hardly be satisfied that he should have received so little of the fruits of his greatness.

## AN EMIGRANT'S ADVENTURES

In 1847 a little book was published in London entitled *Settlers and Convicts, or Recollections of Sixteen Years' Labour in the Australian Backwoods*. The author called himself "An Emigrant Mechanic," and stated in his preface that he withheld his name (which is believed to have been Harris) in order to prevent the identification of certain people upon whom he commented unfavourably. He states that he left England just after completing an apprenticeship in London, and after receiving on his twenty-first birthday £130 left him by a relative. He spent £80 in an outfit, £25 on his passage in the steerage, and sailed apparently in the summer of 1829. His description of Sydney will amuse those who know the magnificent city of the present day. "At this period Sydney was but ill-lighted: only a few lamps were scattered throughout the whole length of George Street (the main thoroughfare), which, from the King's Wharf to the end of the houses at the foot of the Brickfield Hill, can scarcely be less than a mile and three-quarters."

IMAGINE the delight with which, after being unsuccessful for about three weeks, I got my first job in the colony. At the period of my debarkation most of the large settlers were up the country on their farms, it being the season for important farm operations, such as sheep-washing, sheep-shearing, wool-pressing for exportation, reaping, cattle muster, etc.; and besides, I had no acquaintance in Sydney from whom I could hear of employment, or to whom I could make myself known. My engagement at last was more a matter of accident than the result of my own endeavours. The landlord of the public-house where I went every morning, to look over the advertisements, in hope of finding something that would suit me, had been brought up to the same trade as myself; knowing what kind of work I was seeking, he recommended me to a customer of his who had come up from the Five Islands with a boat-load of cedar, and wanted a snug little hut put up for his family; they had been there some time, but had been living, hitherto, under a few sheets of bark.

The Five Islands (by the aborigines much more euphoniously called Illa Warra) is a tract of New South Wales a short distance south of Sydney, on the sea-coast, and so called from five small islands which lie a short distance off, immediately abreast of it. It may be described loosely as a plot of the richest soil, bounded on one side by the sea, and on the other by enormous masses of mountain, confusedly heaped together. These are covered either with dense dark forests,

or low bushy scrub, knee high or higher, with flats of swampy table-land, and gloomy ravines, into whose depths the eye cannot reach. The soil is excellent. I have heard some of the settlers say that they could dig down forty feet through the soil of their farms on this seaside tract without finding a stone as large as a pea. Little crystal brooks of the coldest and purest water, making their way out of the mountain reservoirs above, traverse the ground at all seasons of the year, in their passage to the sea.

It was therefore one of the most amiable features of the policy of the best governor this colony ever had, to give out in this district farms to a number of little settlers; for a poor man's use of land is of course first agricultural, and a fertile soil must be an immense advantage. Amidst the wild dark gullies of the mountain, and along the solitary course of the cool shadowy streams, grew at that time great numbers of rich and massive cedars, the price of the timber of which was so high as to counterbalance, in the minds of the hardy working men of the colony, the difficulties, toils and perils of procuring it for the Sydney market.

My agreement with Mr. — (the settler who now wanted a hut put up) was soon made, for I knew so very little of the customs of the colony that I saw no objections to anything he proposed. It was stated in the agreement, which was a written one, that I was to proceed to Illa Warra and erect for Mr. — a house of such or such timber, of so many feet length, so many breadth,

and so many height, etc. etc.; in consideration whereof, Mr. — was to pay me the sum of £75; supply me with rations at a rate specified for each article; lend me one of his servants to assist in cutting down and splitting the timber, and other work requiring two hands; and draw out of the bush the split stuff, etc. as soon as it was ready. The bargain thus far concluded, he told me I could have, if I chose, an advance of £5, before leaving Sydney, to buy any extra tools I wanted. I then found I should need to buy a cross-cut saw and some other small articles, which however I did with my own money, still having sufficient by me for that purpose; and having seen the tools, my own tool chest, and clothes, etc. aboard the boat, started along with one of Mr. —'s men by land for the Five Islands.

It was a very hot morning, and as we had each a small bundle, our jackets were off before we were two miles over the red, dusty hills just out of Sydney. At one or two creeks where we attempted to drink, the water was so dreadfully brackish as to be too nauseous to swallow; and into one of them, from a little branch just above my head, as I was tasting, dropped a yellow snake about a foot long, and as soon as he had accomplished this feat swam over to a hole in the opposite bank, apparently as well pleased to have escaped me as I certainly was to have escaped him.

Finding so little relief from the creeks, we resolved to push on to the half-way house and have some refreshment and a smoke. A good

heart soon gets through its task; so in little more than a couple of hours we reached our destination. After stopping about half an hour we lighted our short pipes (for such is the usual traveller's pipe in New South Wales, where everybody smokes except ladies) and started again, when less than three hours' walking brought us to Liverpool, beyond which, however, we had still thirteen miles to go to complete our first day's stage. I never wish to have such another walk; by the time we reached Liverpool I had actually ceased to perspire, and was in a high fever; moreover, as is mostly the case, long confinement on ship-board had so unfitted my feet for walking, that they had swelled even to above the ankles so much that at night I could hardly get my half-boots off.

At the suggestion of my companion, we deferred our further journey till the cool of the evening. Before our departure from the township, about seven in the evening, I heard the people talking of the fire that was burning in the bush, and saw numbers of them assembled in groups, pointing out to each other its progress across the adjacent country. In New South Wales, as the winter days are much longer than they are in high latitudes, so the summer days are much shorter: thus when we were two hours on the road it had become quite dark, and as we were intersecting by that time a tract of bush that the fire had already swept through, I had a full opportunity of examining this, one of the finest sights which tropical countries display.

Our road was about the width of an English second-rate turnpike road. Above us the sky was gloomy and still; all round us the far-stretching forests exposed a strange and varied pageant of darkness and fire, accompanied by the crackling of flames and the crash of falling trees. Here was a bridge over a deep creek, now empty with summer drought, with all its huge sleepers glowing in red charcoal and tumbling together into heaps in the channel, and carrying down with them the top layer of slabs that, covered with earth, had been the roadway; over these we had to leap and clamber as we could, unless there was some track down across the creek-bed, by the side of the bridge. Once my companion was very nearly in a furnace of red charcoal up to his middle, or rather he *was* in; for the ground sank beneath his feet, and with that admirable presence of mind which a rough life so generally engenders, he flung himself, while sinking, forward on his hands on to a solid spot, and instantaneously drew his legs up after him and sprang forward.

Here, again, some huge old tree came thundering down right across the road, and its boughs kindling from the opposite side were in full roaring blaze, lighting up everything nigh with ruddy brilliance, and throwing into the dense volume of smoke above a red semi-transparency. Farther on again, where the bush was thinner and the materials for ravage more scanty, the fire had nearly subsided; all was obscure and silent, except some single trunk, off in the bush, hollow



and old and headless, through whose chimney-like barrel went upwards with fierce steady roar a volume of flame and crowds of sparks into the blackness of night; and then, all on a sudden, the fire would reach a cluster of tree-heads as yet untouched, and go blazing and crackling and leaping through them until nothing was left for it to devour.

The heat was in many places intense, and the smoke in others suffocating; whilst snakes, guanass, bandicoots, opossums, etc., were crossing the road in every direction, each in its natural dumbness or with its wild weak cry of fear. In one place we saw a very large opossum—in the language of the country an “old man ’possum”—on the edge of a lofty hollow tree trunk, that had been no doubt his home, out of which and alongside him, as he moved to and fro to avoid it, the increasing fire kept ever and anon shooting up its pointed tongues. We stood watching him until the poor animal, no longer able to endure the torture, leaped to the ground, a height of full forty feet, where to my astonishment, after lying an instant motionless, he picked himself up suddenly, then fell again and rolled over and over three or four times, and finally went off like mad across the bush. I have since found that the gift of these animals in this way is perfectly wonderful; certainly if there is in this world an unconquerable, dare-devil animal, it is the “old man ’possum,” and indeed all his family—mother, sons and daughters—after their sucking days are over: until then you may tame them.

Before we got into Campbell Town, our destination for the night, we met with another and different exemplification of the effects of the fire on dumb animals. One of the commissaries of the colony had ridden his horse out from Campbell Town towards Liverpool, where he resided, as far as where the fire was pretty fierce on each side of the road, and to some distance onward through it; but here the horse became frightened, then restive, and then unmanageable; and when we came up, horse and rider were literally pirouetting together in circles about the road, the commissary on foot, holding the bridle with both hands, and the horse for the most part on two legs also, leading the dance. With a good deal of exertion we succeeded in driving the terrified animal in the same direction as his rider wished to lead him in, until quite clear of the fire, and then left them.

At nearly twelve o'clock at night we reached our journey's end, a little hut by the road-side, just entering the township. Here my fellow-traveller had a brother living, whose lagging [transportation] having occurred some years before his own, he was now free; and had a job of splitting and fencing from the settler to whom the ground belonged. My companion's well-known voice soon aroused the sleeper, who came to the door in his shirt: in his shirt lit the fire; in his shirt got us supper; in his shirt joined us in a feed and a smoke; and in his shirt made our bed, and tumbled into it with us.

But here I must remember that the mysteries

of an Australian bedmaking demand somewhat explicit description. I shall not generalize, but speak here of the particular instance alone. The hut itself, which was merely a few sheets of bark stripped from trees, and each varying from the size of a common door to that of double that width by the same length, was but a single area of about nine feet one way by six the other; the roof, too, was of bark, and of the usual shape. One of the six-foot ends was a chimney, throughout its whole width, in which the fire was made by logs of any length and thickness available. On the earthen hearth, at the other six-foot end, was a sort of berth, also of bark, like the bunks on board ship, fixed at about three feet from the ground; whilst at the nine-foot side next the road was the door, which likewise was of bark; and at the opposite parallel side was a little table, and that too was of bark, to wit, a sheet about three feet one way by two the other, nailed on to four little posts driven into the ground, and having of course its inner or smooth side upwards.

The architect of the building had used all his materials whilst green, so that in seasoning they had twisted into all manner of forms except planes: and as is usually the case, the worst example came from the most responsible quarter; the table was the crookedest thing in the whole hut, not excepting the dog's hind leg. Standing about the floor were sundry square-ended round blocks of wood, just as they were first sawn off the tree transversely: they were each about eighteen inches long, and their official rank in

the domestic system was equivalent to that of the civilized chair.

After a good supper of hot fried beefsteaks, damper bread and tea, which our host, a free-hearted, hardworking bushman, gave with many a "Come, eat, lad; don't be afraid; there is plenty more where this came from," etc., etc., according to the custom of the colony and especially of his class, we betook ourselves to a smoke of good old Brazil, over the latter part of our quart pots of tea; and then at nearly two o'clock my companion reminded his brother that it was "time to pig down." Accordingly our entertainer, clearing the floor by making us stand in the chimney, putting the blocks under the table, and giving his dog a kick, which I thought the thing least to his credit that I had seen him do, began to "make the dab."

This was accomplished by stretching his own bed, which was only adapted for a single person, lengthwise across the hut, at about six or seven feet from the fire-place; then lying down across the hut in the same manner between the bed and the fire-place all the old clothes he could muster of his own; and finally over these he spread about half a dozen good-sized dried sheepskins with the wool on. These, with a blanket spread over the whole, really made a very tolerable bed. Certainly towards morning I began to feel a good deal as if I were lying with my body in a field and my legs in the ditch beside: however, I have had many a worse lodging between that night and this.

I was awakened by our host coming in from his work to breakfast. It was about eight o'clock, and his brother, who had also been up some time, had lit the fire, boiled a piece of salted beef, baked a cake on the hot hearth, and made the tea. This sort of readiness and activity is a remarkable feature in the character of the working population of the Australian colonies.

After breakfast we lit our pipes, and bidding our hospitable acquaintance good-bye, started once more. To his hospitality was added a pressing invitation to me to stop at his hut at any time I might be coming by that way. Our next stage was to Appin, which—the excessively hot day before being succeeded, as is often the case in this country, by a cloudy and rather bleak one—we accomplished easily by noon. Our way still lay between forests in some places, and in others over fine, lofty, cleared and cultivated hills, along a good turnpike road. After dinner, which we took at the little inn of the settlement, we struck off along a wild bush track, direct for the coast mountains; for it should be stated, although our journey was from one sea-side place to another, we had made it by a wide sweep inland, and not in a direction parallel to the coast; the country immediately behind which, in this part of New South Wales, being so broken and mountainous as to afford no practicable track. Indeed, I could not but wonder how the road we were now pursuing from Appin towards the coast had been discovered. I was not then aware that the aborigines are so well acquainted with

the bush as to be able to point out the most practicable tracks in any direction.

After travelling through dense and lofty forests on rich soil, over dwarf brush and scrub on stony hills and sandy plains, bare rocks and rushy swamps—in fact, after traversing a line of country as varied in character as can be imagined—we came toward sundown to the entrance of the thick brush of the Illa Warra mountain above Bullie. I recollect one incident that struck me very forcibly as we made our way to the brink of the descent; I suddenly became sensible of a most delicious scent of musk, and on calling my companion's attention to it he stopped and plucked a leaf from a beautiful slender shrub, whose long shoots overhung our path, and gave it me to smell. It was a tree musk-scented, and to such a degree that the leaves I put in my pocket-book and carried away with me retained their agreeable odour when I examined them many months afterwards.

We now soon came to the edge of the mountain. At one spot we stood on the brink of a precipice of vast depth, and saw down below us the mighty sea diminished into insignificance, most like the waters of a lower world. The mountain, at the spot where we went down, is pretty closely timbered, and the trees are lofty: no grass grows beneath them, as is usually the case where the forest is sufficiently dense to keep the ground under continual shadow. In the midst of our descent, which was so steep as to

compel us in some places to stop ourselves against the trees, I was surprised to recognize the tracks of dray-wheels (drays being the common luggage conveyance of the colony); for it was evidently impossible that any beast could back a dray-load down such a steep. My fellow-traveller, however, informed me that it had been let down by ropes fixed to the dray, and passed round the trees; the shaft bullock (for oxen are the draught beasts in common use) merely holding up the shafts. I was glad at length to find myself at the foot of the mountain. I think I never felt anything more difficult to bear than the strain on the knee joints, occasioned by this descent; it was not exactly pain, but something worse.

The Australian twilight is short; and it was now become almost dark. Happily we had but a short way to travel before reaching our resting-place for the night. We were now on that flat bordered on the one side by the sea, and on the other limited by the mountain, which I have already mentioned as being the Illa Warra district; and at this particular point it is scarcely a gunshot across. We consequently could hear the measured wash of the sea distinctly through the solemn stillness of the evening forest. A feeling of breathless awe steals over the spirit in traversing these grand and solitary forests amidst the thickening obscurity of evening: and buoyant as my spirits then were, I could not help being sensible of this influence.

Suddenly the quick, cheerful bark of a dog startled the echoes; and in another instant a voice

of Irish accent called him back as he came bounding towards us from round the corner of a square low building that was just discernible in the dark. A few more steps, and turning the corner of this building we stood at the door of the settler's hut where we were to stop for the night. It was one of those huts which must be ranked among the remarkable objects of Australian life. Situated on some main track and alone in the midst of the wilderness, one of these little "cribs" necessarily becomes the nightly rendezvous of numbers of travellers. If the traveller have no food with him, a share of what there is is always freely offered him; whether any remuneration is given depends entirely upon the circumstances and disposition of the parties. If it be a poor man whose hut the wayfaring public has thus invested with the dignity of an inn, persons in good circumstances always make him some present for the accommodation: if it be a settler in tolerably good circumstances who is thus situated, remuneration is not thought so imperative; but in either case if the traveller be a poor man, he is welcomed to whatever there may be, and nothing is expected from him in return.

The same hospitality is maintained in accommodations for rest. Those who have a blanket with them contribute it to the general stock; those who have none have equal share with those who have. These customs lead very naturally to a great degree of frankness and cordiality among the persons, most of whom are thus meeting for the first time, and the evenings consequently are



for the most part spent in cheerful conversation and merriment. This species of arrangement extends throughout the colony; with this difference, that off the main lines of road, and still more so the farther you advance into the bush, the usual run of travellers are not only not expected to make any recompense, but in many places it would be treated as an insult to offer it.

Meantime such in this respect were our night's quarters. The hut was well built of slabs split out of fine straight-grained timber, with hardly a splinter upon them; and consisted of several compartments, all on the ground floor. The only windows were square holes in the sides of the hut, and a good log fire was blazing in the chimney. On stools and benches and blocks about the hut sat a host of wayfarers like ourselves, and several lay at their ease in corners on their saddle-cloths or blankets, whilst saddles and packs of luggage were heaped up on all sides. Supper was over, and the short pipes were fuming away in all directions. Our hosts were two Irishmen, brothers, who had got a little bit of good land cleared here in the wilderness, and refused nobody a feed and shelter for the night. They soon put down a couple of quart pots of water before the blazing fire, made us some tea, and set before us the usual fare, a piece of fine corned beef, and a wheaten cake baked on the hearth.

And here I should inform the reader how a damper is made. Flour is mixed up with water, and kneaded for a couple of minutes; the dough is then flattened out into a cake, which should never be

more than an inch and a half or two inches thick, and may be of any diameter required; the ashes of the wood, which is burnt almost everywhere in great profusion, owing to its plentifulness, are then drawn off the hearth (for the fire is on the ground, not in a grate) by a shovel; and on the glowing smooth surface thus exposed the cake is lightly deposited, by being held over it on the open hands, and the hands suddenly drawn from under it. The red ashes are then lightly turned back over the cake with the shovel. In the course of twenty minutes or half an hour, on removing the ashes, the cake is found excellently baked; and with a light duster, or the tuft of a bullock's tail, every vestige of the ashes is switched off, and the cake, if the operations have been well conducted, comes to table as clean as a captain's bisquit from a pastry-cook's shop.

Merrily sped the couple of hours betwixt our arrival and going to bed. One sang a song, another told some tale of the olden time when but few white men were in the colony, another repeated the news he had just heard of the bush-rangers, another described a new tract of land he had just found out for a cattle-run, and others contented themselves with that endless subject of dissertation among the colonists, the relative excellences of their working bullocks.

My share was to answer all the questions (rather all that were answerable) which any and all thought proper to put to me on the subject of affairs in England; and to pocket with the best grace I could (for most of these men had been

convicts) the jokes they not very sparingly, but I must say with very good humour, cut on me for having come to the colony "to make a fortune," or for being "a free object" [subject], or for having "lagged myself for fear the king should do it for me."

All these little matters notwithstanding, the evening passed away very pleasantly; if there were many things in these men which I could not approve, there was much more that I could not but admire. There was a sort of manly independence of disposition, which secured truthfulness and sincerity at least among themselves. If the penalty for the practice of that truthfulness toward the superior classes had been fixed too high, I felt that allowance ought to be made for it in estimating their character.

Some time before midnight a general collection of bedding took place, as usual; the customary belt of bed was constructed all across the hut in front of the fire; and as in this instance the hut happened to be about twelve or fifteen feet across, and we mustered nearly a man to each foot of the diameter, a very pretty row of capless heads and bare feet soon displayed themselves beyond the opposite ends of the blanketing. On blazed the merry fire made up for the night; loud snored those who were so disposed, and louder grumbled ever and anon those who were not; hither and thither bounded and barked the dog around the hut, till he thought his master was asleep, and could no longer take notice of his vigilance; and dreams

came and realities went; and memory had no more added to her task of the day.

With the dawn all was bustle, for Jem and Pat Geraghty were early risers and hard workers. The latter of them, poor fellow! was killed two or three years afterwards by a pistol going off in his pocket. Many a kind word has there been uttered over his memory by the traveller when passing the hut where his good-natured voice is heard no more! Bad habits are easy to learn; and here it was I recollect the following example: I first lit my pipe as I dressed myself. The horsemen were not long in finding their horses, for it is usual for every horseman to carry his hobbles slung on his horse's neck, and putting them on the beast's forelegs at night, turn him out in the open forest to shift for himself. Most horses live on grass in this way for months together, and it is almost incredible what work they can perform.

For instance, I have known a stockman ride his horse sixty or seventy miles a day, and with little abatement continue this for five or six days together; the horse all the time feeding only on grass and stabling in the bush. Of course I do not mean to state this as the average; I merely cite it as a single case that came within my knowledge to show what a horse *can* do without artificial food and housing. It is however nothing at all uncommon for a stockman to jog fifty miles a day for several days together. When turned out for the night the horses seldom stray far; they are hungry and tired, and like to make the most of their time on any patch of good grass they come

to. But if a young horse does happen to walk off, he is easily tracked by the experienced eye of the bushman; and hobbled as he is, as easily overtaken. It sometimes, however, happens that a horse breaks his hobble chain, and then good-bye. It may be months before he is heard of again; by which time he has got hardly recognizable with good looks, sleek and pursy, and retires into some snug gully of the mountains, enjoying his leisure with dignity.

Breakfast over, first one and then another started. Most were going up the mountain we had come down. A few hundred paces brought us out on to the sea-beach; and here my fellow-traveller, taking off his boots (for the labouring class wear neither stockings nor socks), began to pace lightly along the wet sand from which the tide was retreating; and observing how much more easily he seemed to walk thus than in his half-boots, I followed his example, which proved to be a very good one. Our walk was now for some miles a most delightful one; here we kept the tide-washed sand; there, where a long point shot out into the sea, we struck through the grassy bush across it to the next beach. At length we struck entirely into the bush, and passing through the most novel and beautiful scenery, made our way toward the Yalla Lake.

In one spot I recollect we came suddenly on the most beautiful little natural meadow in the midst of the tall gloomy forest. So green was the sward and so level the surface that I could not for a long time yield belief to the assurance

that it was not of artificial construction. It had obtained the name of *Fairy Meadow*. In other places we passed along avenues over-arched with the boughs of trees and vines, so dense that no sunbeam penetrated; the soil was damp as in winter, and bare of all herbage. Here for the first time I saw the lofty cabbage-tree, shooting up its slender barrel, seldom more than a foot in diameter at the height of three feet from the ground, to a height of one hundred or one hundred and fifty feet, and spreading out its umbrella-shaped top, swayed to and fro by every breeze.

Some of the creeks we had to pass were rather queer-looking places to be crossed by such bridges as alone offered themselves. The Mullet Creek, where we passed it, must have been nearly five-and-thirty feet wide; and the bridge was one of these slender cabbage-trees grown on the bank and flung by some bushman or black across the creek with his axe, either with a view to using it as a bridge, or for the sake of the interior part of the head, which is very similar when dressed to cabbage, and is a favourite article of food with many. I confess that it was with no slight trepidation that I made my first attempt to walk betwixt thirty and forty feet upon a small round surface, the middle of which was curved down nearly to the very water's edge, with its own weight merely, and with the weight of the passenger was actually under water two or three inches; and which all the while kept springing and plashing the water at every step that was taken. But as my guide, who was used to these

feats, as I also soon became, made his way across, without expressing any doubt about my nerve I scarcely had any alternative but to follow him. Again pulling off my boots and stockings, I began to edge myself slowly across sideways, but I quickly found that would never do; I was nearly gone, when the thought struck me to imagine myself walking along the joist of an unboarded house, which I was pretty well used to, and following the thought by the practice I turned face forward and stepped carelessly and firmly on. I found I could do it this way very well, only the spot that was under water in the middle rather balked me. However, it was but a single step, and that over I felt myself so bold that I did the remainder with the utmost assurance. The agility and ease with which the blacks trot across these cabbage-tree bridges is quite astonishing; even the gins [women] with their pickaninnies on their backs seem to cross quite at their ease.

We now betook ourselves to a narrow path or track, and following it at length arrived at a cattle station on the border of the lake, where a good dinner of hot beef-steaks, bread and tea was soon set before us.

The last stage of my journey (the third days' from Sydney) completed, that evening we supped in safety at our journey's destined end.

In two days' time I had found a fall of timber (as a group of trees is termed), which, with due information from my quondam guide, now my mate, I had no doubt would suit my purpose. They were fine tall black butts, even as a gun-

barrel, and as straight in the grain as a skein of thread. We "tumbled" two or three for trial, taking off and splitting up a cut the required length of the slabs: these were to be let into ground-plates below and wall-plates above, all round, to form the sides of the hut. The slabs all ran out beautifully; you could scarcely tell them from sawed stuff; there was hardly a splinter on half a dozen of them. When work goes like this it is rather a pleasure than a toil, and for about another week or so we went rattling on like sticks a-cracking. It was a new kind of work to me, certainly, but still so similar to what I had been used to, that I understood *how* to do every part of it directly I saw it before me. This is generally the case in a variation of work where the same tools are still used.

We were up by daybreak, worked for about two hours, and then had our breakfast, which was of damper, salt pork fried, and good tea—for tea and sugar are used among bushmen very prodigally. My mate and myself often used a pound of tea and six pounds of sugar between us in a week. The same is the case with tobacco. I mostly used close on half a pound weekly, till I found its undermining effect on my constitution, and began to try to leave it off. After breakfast we pelted away again till twelve o'clock, and then had dinner, which was damper, pork and tea again; and lay down till the heat of the day was over, which was about three o'clock where we were: we then worked for another hour, had a lunch of damper



and tea and pork, and knocked along till night. About 8 p.m. we had our supper, pork, tea and damper, and soon after nine o'clock were under the blankets.

My mate quickly slept; I did not. It soon became quite a custom to lie and ruminate. Everything was so new and so strange, and I seemed so independent. These ruminations originated in my habits of reflection, which never left me, and have been serviceable in all my subsequent life.

The spot where we had pitched our tent was a small grassy forest on the hill side; and everywhere around it, down below in the endless ravines, and up above towards the insurmountable heights of the range, was thick tangled brush growing amidst lofty trees, so thick-set that beneath them was perpetual shade, or rather something more gloomy still. The ground was covered with decaying leaves and old water-logged windfall trees, so rotten that the foot could break its way deep into the substance of that gnarled wood which at one time would have stopped a cannon-ball. Wherever you went, creeks of crystal ice-like water, plunging down the mountain side, each in its stony bed, kept up a murmur day and night; never changing save when increased by rains into the roar of a torrent.

This mountain, or, more properly, heap of mountains, ran down, where we were at work, nearly into the sea, and for many miles every way the character of the vegetation was as I have described. Here and there certainly a little patch of grassy

forest would assert a place for itself on the shoulder of a hill, and partly down the side; but generally the entire surface of this mountain, for many miles up and down the coast every way, was clothed with this thick brush; besides which so irregular and broken and confused was the surface of the range itself that even the best bushmen felt timid of committing themselves to it. Thus, in one of these little grassy forests in the midst of the bush, on the shoulder of an easy ridge about two miles back from the sea, and so far up that we could see the sea like a broadish sheet of water below us, we pitched our little hut. It was no more than a few sheets of the bark that we had stripped off our black butts, leaned together, top to top, tent-like, with one end stopped by another sheet, and the fire a few feet in front on the ground at the other.

Here we had been, say ten days, when it began to rain; and, as is the case generally at this season of the year in Australia when it sets in for a week's rain, it rained with a will. I began to be initiated into the disasters of a bush life. The rain came through the roof of the hut as if we had been making arrangements in its favour; and no sooner had we stopped it there than, coming down the hill, it began to run through the bottom of the hut like a mill-stream; and as we had, in our confidence of fine weather, laid our beds on the ground, they got thoroughly soaked. Scarcely had we in the pouring rain dug a trench round the back of our hut, to turn the water, when we found the rain had put the fire out; and as we happened

to have come out without tinder-box, flint and steel (an omission for which, when a more practised bushman, I should never have forgiven myself), Dick had to go to the farm to get one.

When he came back it was dark and still raining, and I, in my inexperience, had not been mindful to get any dry wood; which he had then to take his axe and get as well as he could in the dark. Had I been left to seek it, I suppose my search would have been a long one, but Dick went straight to a tree whose butt the bush-fires had hollowed out, and soon knocked off a lot of dry splinters from the inside. Nobody but he who has experienced it has any comprehension of the enjoyment of supper when it does come after these bush troubles throughout some dismal rainy day, and of that nerve-tuning smoke, when supper is over, that puts an end to even the bare recollection of them.

And here I must tell the reader that we were not altogether alone in these savage solitudes. As I have already hinted, the costly and fragrant cedar was at this time a common forest tree in the shady recesses and beside the cool stony creeks of this vast old mountain. When I add that, at the time of which I write, nearly a hundred pairs of sawyers had gradually come down from Sydney and gathered into this mountain, and were (as they also continued to be for years afterwards) slaughtering away in all directions, it will not be wondered at that the pride of the Five Island Cedar Brush is long since gone; and especially when it is considered that no more is done by the

brush-sawyer than just to break the logs down into planks, many of which contain four, five, six hundred square feet. These logs, being then freighted to Sydnev and on to England, are cut up in timber-yards as they are wanted.

Meantime imagine that, scattered at various distances from us all over the seaward side of the range, where the cedar grows, were these hundred pairs of sawyers, each pair having its one or two labourers or axe-men, whose business was to save the sawyers' time by falling the trees, cross-cutting them into logs, building scaffold-pits, making roads and bridges, and helping at any heavy lifts. Some of these gangs were within less distance of us than the farm was, but there was no road from their huts to ours, and to travel the cedar brush in the twilight of a rainy day is next to impossible. So my mate had gone to the farm.

The reader may suppose this first wet day over, and may imagine it going on patter, patter, patter all night, as we lay not very comfortably on our wet beds, with, however, the dry side turned upwards, and all the old clothes and blankets we could spare laid on the top to keep the damp from soaking up to us : and he may suppose the next day passing and passed; our fire kept good; our pipes filled and emptied again, and again, and again; several extra pots of tea drunk out of a sheer want of occupation; and ourselves venturing out two or three times in the course of the day to look if it were likely to clear up, but discerning nothing with our eyes but trees

upon trees below, around, above, with an occasional little column of smoke curling slowly up from where they were freshening the fire at some sawyer's gunyah in a gully; and feeling no breath of air, but only the constant sprinkle of the rain; and hearing nothing but the sudden dead crash down of the big limb of some fast decaying tree breaking off soddened and overweighted by the wet; or it might be at distant intervals a something like the low harsh sound of the sea rattling the pebbles of a pebbly beach a little down in the woody depth to the left, but as faint and soon gone as the sigh of the dying. And, furthermore, let the reader suppose the day closed, supper over, a good pile of logs on the fire for the night (over which by this time we had got a couple of sheets of bark placed so as to turn the rain), a cheerful blaze mounting silently upwards, and us in bed.

It might be about half-past ten, but was not more than eleven o'clock, my mate snoring as usual, I thinking over the novel world around me, when I suddenly heard, first the clatter of horses' feet on a stony corner of the hill just above us, and then the voices of men talking; and the dog, which was a rare old fellow of the bull breed, rushed off, almost without stopping to open his eyes, in the direction the sound came from. The next instant I heard him at bay, and then came a volley of oaths that if we did not call off the dog, the speaker would shoot him. Of course I jumped out of bed and ran out in front of the hut and called the dog in. But Bully knew his

customers better than I did, and not a foot would he come away; and I could hear him plunging about in the brush trying to get an opportunity to lay hold.

By this time Dick was awake and out with me, and snatching up a fire-stick he went directly to where the dog was barking, and I followed him. We found him darting round four men and two pack-horses, who had got within about a hundred yards of the hut before Bully checked them, but had ever since halted, having quite as much as they could do to take care of the calves of their legs. On our reaching them, one of the men, a little short fellow as broad as he was long, said: "Now, my lads, call off your dog unless you want him shot; we don't want to do you any harm, but we want a guide, and one we mean to have." At the same time that he said this, however, he covered me with his piece, and one of his pals, seeing this, did the same by my mate. Necessity, wherever it shows its head, is your only lawgiver, so we complied without the least hesitation; and Bully, once called off and ordered away to the hut fire, took no further active part in the affair beyond every now and then manifesting a quite uncontrollable inclination to sneak up towards one or other of our visitors' legs.

The custom of the bush led to our immediately putting down three quart pots of water (we had not a fourth) to make tea for them, and they filled and lit their pipes, but nothing particular was said on either side; for I had come to the con-

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clusion that they were bushrangers from their arms and the meanness of their dress, and their unshaven beards, whilst they on their part seemed to think it quite unnecessary to give us any explanation whatever. At length the short man who was the former spokesman, said: "How far is it to your cove's [master's]?" "About a mile and a half," my mate answered; "but the road is very bad of a night—there is no beaten track, only a marked tree line." [It is the custom in new countries to take a good-sized chip, say as large as a sheet of note paper, out of both sides of trees within easy sight of each other, and that range true along the shortest line to any place whither it is desired to make a road.] "We just marked the line the day we came out here to split, but there's no beaten track."

"Well, one of you knows it well enough to find it in the dark; we have been told so by them that know in the mountains."

"My mate," said Dick, "is hardly a month in the country."

"Oh! we know that; he's one of the free objects—bad luck to 'em! what business have they here in the prisoners' country? But after all, it's prisoners that's worse to one another than these emigrants are to them."

"To be sure," said another; "there's bad and good of all sorts, mate. I never think a bit worse of a man for being of one country than for being of another; there's bad and good of all sorts as there is of all religions. If you act as a man, lad [*addressing me*], you will be respected by every

man that knows himself, let you be free or bond."

"Well," continued the first spokesman to Dick, "if you are ——'s government man, we are told you know every inch of this bush, and you must go with us and show us your cove's farm; we want to see what he's got in his stores. There was a boat-load for him at the boat-harbour last week, for I saw it landed; has he got any grog left?"

It was with great reluctance that poor Dick submitted to make the inevitable acknowledgment that there was indeed safe lodged in the stores at the farm this object of their marauding journey. He, however, endeavoured to make the best of his predicament by bargaining that he should not be taken within sight of the house, promising to wait faithfully at the corner of the fence until their end was attained, to conduct them back again the same way; and it appeared they had another guide a little way off in the bush, behind our hut, who would not come forward, and who was to take them back to a spot they were better acquainted with in the mountain. Probably this was some free man, working near, who was in league with them; such things are too often known in this colony.

The tea was some time boiling, so one of them proposed to have it in coming back, and the others agreeing, they left one in charge of me, which was quite unnecessary, for I could not have found my way from our hut to another by myself at that time of night. They then set off. From



my mate's account afterwards, I learned that on arriving at the farm they left him according to promise at the corner of the paddock fence, but with his hands tied to a rail, in the midst of the pouring rain, and went on to the master's hut by themselves. They got close up to it before the dogs barked, and when they did bark that was all, for they were mostly young dogs and sound sleepers, and not much good as watch-dogs. A knock at the door summoned Mr. —, who was told some travellers who had lost their way were in want of shelter. But the improbability of travellers being lost at that time of a pouring rainy night, in a part where it was almost impossible to get off the high road for the thickness of the brush on each side, with the peremptory tone in which the demand was made, raised his suspicions, and he civilly declined to let them in.

This at once provoked them to throw off the mask, and he was told to open the door in such terms as left him no further prudent plea for refusal. Attempting resistance no longer, he unbarred the door, and the marauders then dispatched one of their number to the government men's hut to keep guard over them with a loaded piece, whilst the remaining two helped themselves to whatever they pleased from the stores. They conducted their operations like men of business; went straight about what they had determined to do; and when it was done, lingered not a minute on the premises.

On going away they told the cove they should

leave a man on the look-out in the bush at the edge of the farm; and if he offered to stir a step himself, or send any of his men for help until eight o'clock in the morning, it would be a bad job for him. This, however, was all bounce. About two o'clock, or a little after, the man who had been left at our hut with me, on hearing our dog bark, ordered me to call him off, giving at the same time that shrill clear "Coo-ee!" which the whites have learnt from the blacks, and which conveys the human voice to so great a distance. I think I have made myself heard with it, of a still night, nearly a mile off. This bushranger's, however, was purposely restrained, and modulated so as to be barely audible at the little distance he supposed his pals to be off; in another minute the short sailor-looking man came lightly and sharply up, into the light of the fire, as a sort of advanced guard, and finding all square, he repeated the Coo-ee in a more careless manner, and presently the other two with Dick and the pack-horses came up.

Without the smallest appearance of trepidation or want of composure, the tall man walked up to the fire, put a coal on the top of his pipe, and began to draw away, saying to me: "Come, lad, now let's have this tea; I'm sure we've earned it." I said nothing, for I really did not know what to say; but I sweetened the three pots of tea for them, and put down, on the little stool we used for a table, our damper and a piece of corned pork, which, for a change, we had boiled before going to bed; and after

they had had a short whiff of the pipe apiece, they pulled out their knives and helped themselves to a good junk of bread and meat each. During their meal, the man who was left with me, and who, I should have mentioned, had employed himself for a very busy half-hour of his watch in stowing away some of our eatables and drinkables, inquired what luck they had had.

"Luck, lad," said my long friend, "why, the very best of luck; there's a couple of five-gallon kegs full of the right stuff slung across Old Bobby, and half-a-dozen pairs of blankets spread over all to keep any water from getting to it; besides a coil of Brazil tobacco between the kegs, as long as all the running rigging of a schooner: and on the mare we've got about sixty weight of sugar and twenty pounds of tea, a nice little bag of flour—I dare say eighty pounds or more—and a few slops."

"Any boots?"

"Yes, lad. I didn't forget you. There's a pair tucked into the mouth of the flour-bag. They're just your fit. I saw them just as I was putting the flour on the horse, and I looked every way for some more, but it was no go. The fat fellow's got a pair for himself, though," he said at the same time that the individual whom I have described before as having been at the boat harbour, held out one of his feet, displaying a snug Wellington boot of Mr. ——'s.

"I don't believe," he said, "the poor beggar's got another pair to put on to go to court in: he'll

have to ride down to Wollongong to fetch the lobsters [soldiers] in his stockings feet."

"Well, be alive, mates," said he who had remained with me; "we shall be none too soon into the mountain. It'll soon be daylight, and if we don't give the rain time to wash out the horse-tracks we shall be done like a dinner. I shall get out these boots and ding [throw away] mine, for I can't walk any farther in them."

The speaker accordingly proceeded, after shaking the logs together so as to make a stronger blaze, to where the mare was quietly picking a few mouthfuls of grass; and, leading her to the fire, he undid the fastenings, and lifting off the bag of flour, brought to light the coveted boots, a pair of common lace-ups. Knocking the flour out of them, he soon had them on his feet, evidently esteeming them a treasure, as they no doubt must have been on those stony ranges, and among so much broken wood, in the dark. After a minute's experiment of their fit and feel, he broke out into a torrent of burlesque gratitude to Mr. —, for having brought him the "fine boots all the way from Sydney." It was perfectly impossible to resist the current of drollery with which the scamp carried on this farcical exhibition for several minutes. His companions laughed, and then I laughed, and at last poor Dick, shivering as he was with the cold and wet, joined the irresistible peal till the tears came in our eyes all round.

It is, I suppose, a property of laughter to

reconcile people, for I found after this was over that much of my ill-feeling towards these fellows was gone; and when they drew out a bottle that they had taken care to provide for the night, because the kegs would be difficult to get at, and poured out about a couple of glasses for each in turn, I could not help drinking with them, wishing them at the same time "some better kind of life."

At length they packed all up snug again, lit their pipes, gave us very particular injunctions, and struck off into the bush, the rain still falling in torrents. Before they were long gone we heard their suppressed Coo-ee, which we supposed to be the signal for the guide they had boasted they had in waiting for them at a few hundred yards off in the brush. Dick had come off worst of the lot. He had been tied by the wrists to a rail of the fence, and left there during the whole time the bushrangers were ransacking the master's hut, a full hour and a half. It was a southerly gale that was blowing, and the spot where he stood was exposed to its full sweep from the sea. I wondered how he could stand it so long. He told me that, after standing still for about a quarter of an hour, watching the lights moving about at the hut as the bushrangers carried on their search, his teeth began to chatter, and the cold, as he expressed it, began to get to his heart; whereupon he set to dancing to keep himself warm, which he did very industriously, with short intervals, for more than an hour, till he was untied.

And surely enough so we found the next day that he had, which indeed was the means of preventing the poor fellow getting flogged and losing his long-expected ticket-of-leave; for the horses were tracked to and from our hut, notwithstanding the rain; and Mr. ——'s rage at his loss, which was about twenty pounds, was such that I really believe he would have given another twenty to have incriminated either the unfortunate fellow who had already been so ill used or myself. The commandant, who was a magistrate also, came up from Wollongong the next day, and he soon saw that we were both entirely guiltless. Mr. —— would not so much as listen to Dick's protestations and defence of himself; but the shrewdness and tact of the commandant (who, however, was one out of a thousand of his cloth) very soon extricated us from all difficulty and suspicion. He said: "Mr. ——, if they tied up the government man, it is not likely they left the free man at liberty: and whether they did tie up the government man, as he says, we can soon ascertain; for a man could not caper about in a pair of heavy boots, as your man says he did, on one spot for a good hour on such a night without making a pretty good puddle."

Examination at once affirmed poor Dick's veracity—there was a hole full of water there six inches deep; so the matter, as far as we were concerned, dropped. Our great error was—forgetting in our confusion that the bush-rangers passing our hut, both in going and

coming, was likely to fix suspicion of participation on us—we had neglected to go in and report the whole affair just as it happened, before the tracks were run down. This was Mr. ——'s grand problem. "If we were not in league with them," he said, "why had we not come in directly they were 'gone, or at least at daybreak, and reported all about it?" We, on our part, who did not know that the bushrangers had given him such forcible directions not to move out of his hut till eight o'clock, continued expecting him out at our hut every minute till breakfast-time, cautiously adhering ourselves to the no less stringent instructions left us. At the same time we might, no doubt, have gone in without incurring any risk; for they would scarcely have left one of their party behind to watch us in a part of the bush they all knew so little of as to require a guide.

Their ruse was altogether a very complete one, if indeed it did not partake as much of fortunate accident as of able intention. In coming and going their track varied little up to a certain creek; but this creek they had both come out of and gone into again at an identical spot. It was a fine level-channelled creek, generally not above six inches deep and perhaps twelve feet wide, and very clear of fallen timber for a brush-creek. With these rains, however, it was running about eighteen inches deep; nevertheless they had kept its channel, so far as we could judge, for a full half-mile to where a main cedar-road crossed it; for nowhere could we find anything that looked

like tracks up the bank out of it, either before reaching this road or afterwards; and if they took this main road, all their tracks on it must have been completely obliterated by nine o'clock in the morning. For not only was it, as most cedar-brush roads are, from the richness of the soil, one long ditch-like line of sludge and water, but by nine o'clock six or seven cedar-drays, each drawn by two or three yoke of bullocks, had passed along it. And as there were no blacks nigh at hand to search the bush for the continuance of the tracks, and the rain still kept falling in torrents all next day, every trace of their point of departure from the main cedar-road, which they had in all probability taken at the creek, was no doubt entirely obliterated before the next morning.

## JOHN PASCOE FAWKNER

WHILE Batman was the founder of Victoria, to John Pascoe Fawkner belongs the proud distinction of being the Father of Melbourne, since it was upon the actual site of the future capital that he established his settlement. Like Batman, Fawkner was a farmer in Tasmania; and the scant area of natural pasturage in that colony being already fully occupied, he sought room for further expansion on the other side of Bass's Strait, where the wide grass plains seemed to offer limitless opportunities.



In July 1835, Fawkner sailed from Launceston in a little vessel called the *Enterprise*. He was, however, driven back by storms and the voyage could not be resumed until the following month. In the meantime, Fawkner himself had been taken so ill that he could not accompany the party, which accordingly went on without him. Thus although Fawkner was not present at this first landing on the site of Melbourne, the credit of the whole undertaking, which was carried out according to his instructions, belongs to him.

A course was made by the *Enterprise*, in the first instance, for Western Port, Phillip Island being reached on the 7th of August. The Western Port entrance was examined with a view to settlement in this quarter; but as it was not of inviting appearance, Western Port was abandoned on the 15th, and Port Phillip entered the next day. Sailing along the eastern shore, the bar at the mouth of the Yarra was reached on the 20th, and the party were engaged until the 29th in sounding and beaconing the river. They then ascended the Yarra, taking at first its minor branch, the Salt Water River, as it seemed to be the largest and straightest tributary; but returning, they ascended the main stream for about eight miles in all, and arrived at a part of the river where it expanded naturally into a small basin. The basin was immediately below a slight fall in the river, caused by a ledge of rocks that ran a short way from the north side into the stream, and which, by the direction it gave to the force of the water, appeared to have



THE FIRST LANDING ON THE SITE OF MELBOURNE'



been the cause of the excavation of the basin. Charmed by this scenery, whose beauties were enhanced by the undulating character of the grassy and open forest country of the northern bank, the party came to an anchor under some trees just below the falls.

The *Enterprise* cast forth upon nature's wharf the first of many cargoes that have since been landed at and around the same busy spot. Fawkner had sent much household goods, two horses, several ploughs, a great variety of seeds, and 2500 fruit trees. The spring season was already coming upon the party, and they were forthwith at work, building, ploughing, and planting. Fawkner himself arrived on the 10th of October, and infused fresh energy into the work. A month previously his people had planted with wheat five acres of land that formed the south-western extremity of Melbourne. Afterwards, when Batman's party obliged him to transfer his labours from this spot, he crossed with his implements to the south side of the river, where the low flat ground was ploughed up, leaving the furrow-marks visible even to the present day in those few and isolated spots that have escaped a still deeper ploughing from the roads, railroads, and other signs of advance and change since that time. His party first settled themselves upon a pretty knoll, green with its fresh grass, and covered with a little forest of shea-oak trees. There they marked out the ground eastwards and northwards into ten-acre sections for distribution amongst the party.

After a while there was a remove a little farther up the river to the bank opposite the basin, and just behind the custom-house in the present Market-square of the city, where Fawkner opened a public-house and hotel. Mr. Jackson, and others of the party, moved inwards, where they selected tracts of pasturage, and afterwards transported their flocks from Van Diemen's Land. Those who settled there were, however, not so well off as those who went farther on and were subsequently less disturbed.

## IN THE GOLDFIELDS

THE discovery of gold in Australia was due to one Edward Hargraves, who left his farm at Bathurst, temporarily, to join in the search for that precious metal in California. He was struck with the similarity between the rocks and strata of the American gold regions and those of his own district of Conobolas in the neighbourhood of Bathurst. On returning home in 1850 he began his search, and, after a few months' digging, found in February 1851 a considerable quantity of gold. He was rewarded for his exertions by the colonial government and appointed Commissioner of Crown Lands. The excitement caused by this event was intensified by the discovery a few months later of masses of gold among heaps of quartz. Three blocks of this substance weighing three hundred-weight yielded just a third of their weight in gold.

Similar masses were found, and in little more than a year over one hundred tons of gold were exported to England, of the value of nearly nine millions sterling. Since that time the supply has been continuous, and shows no signs of exhaustion.

The abolition of transportation to Australia was an immediate result of the discovery of gold. The most enthusiastic advocate of that method of punishment would not venture to let convicts loose in goldfields. Victoria was invaded by adventurers from all parts of the world, bitten by the gold fever; and the influx of people led to social disorganization of all kinds. The following description was written by Kinahan Cornwallis, an indefatigable traveller, who visited Australia in 1853.

IN the November of the year, I, in company with a friend, equipped a dog-cart and tandem, for a drive to the diggings. It was midday when we started, and leaving Elizabeth Street behind, headed towards the village of Flemington, along the main road to all the goldfields. The land on either side was uninviting, and was covered by here and there a group of tents; the aspect of the former appeared to be undergoing some change, which, however much it might enhance its value or effect hereafter, could certainly not be said to have added to its picturesqueness at the present time. In some places it was evidently being cleared for building purposes; in other, and rocky places, it was being dug into quarries, while everywhere the

road was as unfinished as the landscape looked cut up.

However, the work of road-making was proceeding briskly, for we passed several gangs of men levelling it by spade-cutting, and stone-shovelling. Here and there, too, were collected piles of stones, sitting in front of which, men who had likely been, before they came to Australia, accustomed to a very different kind of occupation, were each armed with a hammer, engaged in breaking them. Men of all professions, and gentlemen of no profession whatever, were frequently to be found exercising themselves *on the roads* in return for ten shillings a day, with a free tent, wood and water. Such employment was the common resource of thousands who were, for the time, destitute of means, and could procure no other occupation. Bullock drivers were, often barristers, and barristers bullock drivers; the same will apply to many an inhabitant of St. James's, to whom the clubhouse and the park had once been as familiar as were now the road-making pick and shovel. But still, ten shillings a day was a sum worth earning, and really the work was not hard, for, in the first place, the majority were so unaccustomed to manual labour that they could not work hard; and, in the next place, they were in the gold-country, and they would not.

Now and again we passed the skeleton or carcase of a bullock lying at the roadside, and which had sunk under the heavy dray labour of the goods traffic with the mines; and these, with

other signs, acted as a fair index to the state of the colony at the time, and the premature mortality brought about even more among men than the brutes that were goaded to their toil by the sudden influx of population and the struggle for gold.

The energies of the frame were overtaxed, and what with that, and wet, and windy tents, and unwholesome food, thousands were hurried into premature graves, and now rank among the unrecorded dead on the diggings and elsewhere.

Bullock and horse teams were passed by the dozen, each heavily laden with the necessaries of life, and the requirements of the population at the mines. Equestrians and pedestrians, singly or in droves, lent animation to the entire road; the former were chiefly diggers, who were returning to the mines, most likely after what they called a spree; those on foot were either "new chums," who were unable, or experienced hands who were unwilling, to afford the expense of a horse; each of these carried more or less of a kit, slung across the shoulder. The main street of Flemington, through which all the traffic passed, was alive with throngs of the going and returning.

On arriving at a wooden bridge, built across the Salt Water River, we were charged a toll of two shillings; this construction yielded, by this means, to its owner, more than a thousand pounds per week. We now came upon an extensive plain, at first bearing crops, but, after a few miles, bare of everything but stunted grass. Here, far away to the west and north, thirty miles at least, the



view was horizoned by a chain of rolling hills, so lending something of the picturesque to a flat extent of country, whose stunted trees had been cut down and hacked to pieces for firewood by the straggling occupants of various tents and shanties, and for travellers, and whose ragged stumps were alone left to add ugliness to monotony. Moreover, the plain was more or less cut up with the marks of heavy bullock drays, several of which were now to be seen dragging their slow length across the prospect; this divergence from the main road having been adopted in order to escape the mud and gullies with which it abounded. Pedestrians and horses, however, continued to follow each other over the beaten track.

Towards sunset we reached the vicinity of the Green Hills, a pastoral station, and twenty-five miles from Melbourne. The scenery at this point suddenly changed, and a beautiful prospect greeted the eye. A picturesque confusion of hill and dale, backed by mountain lands and giant forest, were the most prominent traits of the landscape, while near us, and between, stretched a fertile patch of grass land, intersected by a rivulet. After this we continued on through the forest highway a few miles farther till we reached the Bush Inn, a house of call for everybody, and being on the borders of the bush, notoriously frequented by bushrangers. Here we put up for the night.

On the following morning we resumed our journey, the road leading through the Black

Forest, where the roads were even worse than before, and the danger of being "bailed up" considerable. The reader will understand that *bailing up* is synonymous with *sticking up*. The usual plan of proceeding with bushrangers, who generally travel in couples, is to ride up, one on each side of the intended victim, and each, simultaneously, to present his pistol at the head of such object of their attentions, with a request for him to halt and deliver, which if he be wise, he promptly complies with. He is then searched, and everything serviceable about him is appropriated. If, however, he makes a request for sufficient money to carry him to his destination, these fellows in general comply; but if he makes much display of his indignation, he runs a great risk of being tied to a tree, and left there till some passer-by relieves him, the bushrangers invariably galloping off into the forest on completing their work. There is no danger to life or limb, or insult from these desperadoes, if the individuals pounced upon make a ready compliance with their demands for money; and money travellers on the road to the gold mines usually have.

The Black Forest, alike with the other forests of Australia, was as light and airy as an English park, affording but little shelter from the vivid sunlight which blazed above us. From the northern edge of this sylvan region, just emerging into open space, we caught sight of Mount Alexander, the great centre of the goldfields. There was nothing bold, picturesque, or in any way striking about its appearance, which, as

here seen, looked bald, flat, and monotonous. Still it was Mount Alexander, and we had heard enough about it to feel an interest in this first view of its valuable extent. We now passed through the wretched streets of Kyneton, with its repulsive wooden houses, and the collection of hovels at Sawpit Gulley, a township in embryo, and five miles from the gold workings; all this country, however, bore evidence of being highly auriferous. As we advanced a creek bed ran parallel with the road, and this, in the number of deep but deserted holes it presented, was the first sign of the actual diggings. Very soon the panorama of the goldfields, with all its crowded bustle and activity, was disclosed to our view.

We were now passing by tents, and rough wooden shanties; everything bore evidence of an unsettled, uncertain, new-born state of things, although, of course, matters were much better, and conducted here and there on a more permanent scale, than they were even twelve months anterior. The whole scene, however, looked disordered and unpicturesque; man had everywhere around destroyed the beautiful in supplying his own wants. Ragged stumps of trees that had been cut down for firewood were alone left, where the green waving foliage had once sparkled in the splendours of the *riant* morning, ere the wild man had been driven away before the ruthless tide of invasion; heaps of sand, broken ground, and gullies of mud were now to be seen instead of the verdure that once crowned the hills, and

with its carpet of emerald brightened and lent luxuriance to the plain. Everything before me contrasted harshly with what it had been when, in a state of nature, the landscape was gay with the lovely handiwork of Flora—when the wild man danced in his native glee, and every living thing disported in the gladness of its existence. Here all was toil, and life a perpetual struggle, and the wild man, sickening before the aggressive blast of a so-called civilization, was fast withering away, and few indeed were the numbers of his once valiant race.

Hundreds of flags suspended from poles above the roofs of as many houses, fluttered in the breeze. These served to guide the diggers to the various stores, doctors, and other places where some public want was ready to be supplied, at prices which were at once enormous and profitable to the sellers. We threaded our way for some miles through the straggling suburbs of Castlemaine. These diggings extended about eight miles in a direct line, and ramified in their breadth many adjacent valleys and creek beds. Several other goldfields, however, extended in various directions about Mount Alexander, of which Friar's Creek was the principal. The Mount, distant about seven miles from the Government camp, had a freshness of appearance which contrasted pleasingly with the huge graveyard-looking prospect adjacent, as there it stood comparatively undenuded of its forest, and green with verdure. Thousands of diggers were hard at work digging and washing.

We were entertained at the Commissioner's camp that night, and on the following morning set out for Bendigo, another great goldfield, distant thirty miles from the Mount Alexander diggings. Leaving behind the rolling granite country around the latter district, we arrived at the base of a barrier of steep rocky ranges, which here rose directly across the road, and distinctly marked the commencement of the gold-country. The hills were not lofty, but they rose with fine sweeping outlines from the plain into bold isolated masses against the clear sky, and were clothed with a profusion of forest and of verdure to their very summits. The road by a steep ascent reached a gap in the hills commanding a magnificent view to the south, with Mount Alexander rising in solitary beauty out of undulating plains, and shadowy lowlands, and misty mountain ranges far beyond.

In the opposite direction we overlooked the dark forested ridges and deep intervening hollows of the Bendigo goldfield. The gap in the hills was abrupt, and passing through it we immediately descended by a steep narrow gully which, gradually widening, led us to the head of a picturesque and fertile valley, with wooded slopes, verdant gullies branching off right and left, and a wide but low alluvial bottom, through which wound a creek that, here and there expanding, formed a chain of water-holes. This was the Bendigo valley. After following it for about a mile we came to several tents on the margin of the creek, the first signs of our approach to the

great centre of attraction. Continuing on our way, the tents, although still scattered, became more numerous, till at length the slopes and flats were studded with them, while large patches of upturned yellow earth in the midst of the grassy plain or "flat," showed that we had reached the skirts of the diggings.

On the banks of the creek men were standing over tubs of auriferous earth, or "washing-stuff," as it is called, which they worked about with a spade, occasionally tilting out the muddy water, and baling in fresh from the creek. Very soon the tents became as thickly packed as houses in a town, and the road passed between rows of large stores, shops, auction rooms, and such like, while beyond and around were seen, instead of green flats and grassy gullies, vast level areas covered with gravel, clay, and sand, and burrowed with innumerable gold-diggers' "holes."

The creek here appeared close to the road; on its opposite bank we observed a reef of red rock, jagged and pointed, and every chink and crevice of which bore evidence of having been carefully cleared of the earth, which in the natural order of things had once been collected there. This was the famous "Golden Point," the spot where gold was first discovered at Bendigo, in the autumn of 1851. When the cry of gold was abroad in consequence of the recent discoveries in New South Wales, and when every shepherd and storekeeper was an eager prospector, a spot so conspicuous as this, where the precious metal

lay almost on the surface, and in the chinks of the rock, was not likely long to elude search. Had it not been for this golden bar which, like the architectural capitals at Pompeii, just peering above the surface, told of buried treasure, which might be brought to light by digging around, the auriferous riches of Bendigo might still have slumbered for ages unknown to the children of Mammon.

After passing the point alluded to, the road had the creek on one side, and a wide tract of deserted workings on the other, stretching away for miles down the valley. After another mile it again became a street of tents, stores and shops, behind which chaotic heaps of gravel and clay still showed the entire valley had been turned up by the diggers. We had now reached the centre of this great mining district. On a lofty terrace on the left, faced with a steep green escarpment, was to be seen the Government camp and its tall flag-staff and union jack, sentinels on duty, ranges of extensive stabling, and a massive, heavy-looking log hut, serving as a lock-up. At the foot of this terraced hill was the necropolis, and near to its tributary, the Bendigo Hospital. Large wooden stores, auction rooms, and other buildings, evidently of not very recent erection, showed that this spot had long been the centre of a populous mining community.

A stream of busy life was passing up and down the streets of Sandhurst—for such the township is called—as we drove through. There were parties of newly arrived diggers with their high



A STREET IN THE BLENDO DISTRICT AT THE TIME OF THE GOLD RUSH





piled carts; travellers deep in immense thigh boots, and in some dwarfish cases looking as if there was a probability of their sinking out of sight in them, and either mounted on travel-soiled horses or moving about on foot; carts of "washing-stuff" going to the creek to have the colour—that is to say, the gold—washed out; huge drays of merchandise, drawn by long teams of jaded bullocks, just in from a three or four weeks' journey from Melbourne; and diggers, with pick and shovel on shoulder, trudging homeward after the day's work. Contrasting with mud-soiled men and worn-out beasts, we passed a gold-commissioner with gold-laced cap, mounted on a fine sleek steed, and attended by two troopers in the rear.

For the next three miles the road extended through almost continuous lines of stores and shops, while the diggers' tents were to be seen perched on the slopes of the hills, or in the lateral gullies. The valley bottom was still covered with gravel, and burrowed by countless pits and tunnels, through which the creek had carved out a channel. On after-examination, however, we found that a drive up the principal valley gave a very inadequate idea of the magnificent scale of the golden deposits at Bendigo and of the prodigious amount of human labour spent in developing them.

I found, on ascending any commanding eminence, that not only had the entire bottom or floor of the main valley been turned up, but that every intersecting gully, extending into the

ranges right and left, had also been wrought, and that it sent down its tributary yellow stream to meet the great river of diggings that filled the breadth of the main valley.

Looking down the valley, and on the right of the creek, I observed five or six rounded hills with rugged outlines glistening white against the dark ranges behind. These were the celebrated auriferous White Hills. In external appearance and mineral character they were unique, and peculiar to the locality. Two years before, and while the nature of their wealth was still a mystery, a party of diggers toiled patiently for several weeks in sinking a shaft to the depth of seventy feet, chiefly through conglomerated drift of the most obstinate hardness. They were rewarded at length by the discovery of a rich deposit of gold, lying on the top of a bed of white pipeclay of unascertained depth, and through which they tunnelled, bringing down the metal in profusion from the roof of their excavation. While all this had been going forward, many, anxious to profit by the result, had been carefully observing the operations, and no sooner was the success of the undertaking known than the adjacent ground was marked off, shafts were sunk, windlasses erected, and the whole paraphernalia of digging life called into requisition.

The main valley, however, was only a part of this great goldfield. North of the creek there ran a parallel series of seven large tributary gullies, some with workings two or three miles

in extent. South of the principal valley two lateral gullies debouching on the main stream and running up into the ranges till they met, presented a continuous chain of miners excavating, four miles long. Altogether the Bendigo district must at this time have included nearly a hundred gullies and flats, extending over an area about ten miles long by half as much in breadth.

On the following morning we set out on foot, with one of the commissioners as our guide, to inspect the diggings and digging life, more in detail than we had the opportunity of doing on the previous afternoon. I shall give the information gathered, in the same random order in which it was acquired.

Every working in each goldfield has some special name by which it is distinguished, and these are often very odd, and original in their application. Their derivation was traceable to an immense variety of sources; some were attributable to their first workers, as an "American," "Californian," "Canadian," and "New Chum Gulley"; some from incidents occurring in their vicinity, as Choke-em Flat, Murdering Flat, Dead Man's Gulley, and White Horse Gulley; some from the caprice or peculiarity of those who first wrought here, as Peg-leg Gulley, Poverty Gulley, and Cut-throat Gulley. Eagle-hawk Gulley, celebrated for its richness, acquired its name in consequence of a digger, having by chance driven his pick into a nugget which, when taken out, was found in shape,

partly owing to the indentation thus produced, to resemble an eagle hawk's head. A rich gully was distinguished by the classical name of Eureka.

The life of the digger is simple, regular, and tolerably healthy. His dress is a blue elastic vest or jersey, the same as worn by sailors, with the addition, during winter, of an outer coarse serge shirt. His waist is encircled by a plain leather belt, in which he usually carries his fossicking knife, which he uses in dislodging the gold from holes and crevices. If his work necessitate his standing in water, he in general encases his legs in a pair of water-tight knee boots, which are drawn up outside the trousers. He usually rises at daybreak, and he and his mates—one, two, three, or four, as the case may be—first prepare and dispatch their breakfast, and then sally out to their "claim," or "hole." If the latter be far removed from the tent, they carry their dinner, and the never-omitted tin pot for making their tea. At sundown they return, bringing the results of the day's work in a small bag or an old match-box. Supper is then prepared, which, alike with the other meals, consists of beef or mutton, with the invariable bread and tea. The gold obtained during the day having first been carefully washed, is now divided, or added to the general store, which latter is often kept in an old pickle bottle, or a collection of castaways of the kind, and which store is always quietly re-secreted under the ground of the tent or elsewhere.

The evening is commonly spent in chatting,

smoking, and reading any newspaper or other matter at hand, while the party sit on variously improvised seats around the rude fireplace of turf or stone, forming one end of the tent or hut. At an early hour all are asleep on their straw mattresses raised on rough frames, the legs of which are stuck into the ground. A loaded revolver was formerly an indispensable article of the establishment, but it is now hardly needed.

According to the Government regulations, each miner is allowed for working purposes an area of ten square feet, so that the claim of a party usually varies in size according to the number composing such; this rule, however, is rarely strictly adhered to, except in cases of dispute, where claim encroaches on claim. On the selection of the spot for working, the latter is marked out by placing a peg at each corner, and whatever lies beneath that area, but not beyond, is the property of the owners.

In the earlier days of Australian gold-mining, it was common to open a large pit and remove the metal from the bottom. At the present time, however, the workings were in much deeper deposits than those first discovered, and, as a consequence, there was more mining skill called into requisition. Instead, therefore, of the open pit, it was now customary to sink a square or round shaft, three or four feet in diameter, down to the gold-bearing deposit or "boulder," and then to *drive* or excavate horizontally, in search of the glittering ore, in the event of there being none visible at the bottom

of the shaft. On sinking the latter, the clay and gravel is hoisted to the surface either by a rope and bucket by a windlass or by a long lever. The latter is simply a long pole tied loosely to the top of a strong upright post, one end of which pole is heavily weighted, while the bucket is suspended to the other end by a rope. On pulling down this rope, the bucket descends to the bottom of the shaft, and when filled with earth is drawn up again by the leverage of the weighted end of the pole; a happy contrivance, similar to that used for purposes of irrigation on the banks of the Nile.

The auriferous earth or washing-stuff, on being brought to the surface, is carefully piled up, the miner below having first picked out any large and conspicuous nuggets, if such there be, and deposited them in his match-box. The earth is then carted down to the creek, or the nearest water-hole. The method of washing the earth has also been much modified by time and experience. Formerly all was done by the rocker or cradle, and the tin dish, which, being worked by hundreds together round a water-hole, or on either side of a creek, produced an incessant noise, not unlike distant thunder, and which has been compared to the buzzing noise of an immense manufactory. But the cradle, although well adapted for washing the gold from gravel or light soil, proved very ineffectual in liberating it from the stiff clay in which it was subsequently found, and which suggested the use of a puddling tub in its stead.

The latter is simply one half of a beer cask, which, on being called into active service, is half filled with the washing-stuff, upon which water is then baled in from the creek, and the whole worked about with a spade, the miner meanwhile cutting up and turning over the clay till it gradually becomes dissolved in the water. As the liquid thickens into mud, it is poured from the tub, and a fresh supply added, till the clay is washed away, and nothing but clean gravel, sand and gold remains. The metal is then easy of separation from the gravel by means of a cradle, or simply by a tin dish, which latter requires to be dexterously handled.


The digger, who is invariably migratory in his habits, usually carries his puddling tub with him when he journeys from one goldfield to another.

The Long Tom, originated by the Californian miners, and introduced into Australia, is a far more efficient apparatus than the last mentioned; but it is necessary to use it in a running stream, in order to work it to advantage, and running streams not being found everywhere, it is available only at certain times and places. It consists of a trough ten or twelve feet in length, by sixteen inches in width, and tilted so that water may flow rapidly down it. An iron grating, perforated with holes as large as a fourpenny-piece, forms the lower end, and is tilted up in an opposite direction to that of the trough, so that earth and stones when washed down are arrested, and lodged on the grating. The head of the



trough must be continually supplied with water, either from a stream or by a pump; by this means a constant current pours down the incline, washing as it goes. The auriferous earth is thrown in at the head, and as it is carried down by the stream, it is worked about and turned back with a spade; the light earth and clay are quickly dissolved and washed away, and when the clean gravel reaches the lower end, it is arrested by the iron grating and removed with the shovel, while the gold and sand fall through the perforations into a box placed beneath, the contents of which must be again washed, in order to the more readily extract the metal. This mode of procedure is much more rapid than that of the puddling tub, and is frequently resorted to during the wet season in working old diggings, and in washing the "tailings" of the cradles of former and less careful washers.

The life of the digger is very free and independent; he works hard, but he does so at his own free will, and in the hope of acquiring sufficient gain to enable him to choose an occupation more congenial to his taste, if not entire independence. He is generous, and as unsuspicious as he is frank. He is now the type of a much better man than ordinarily was the digger of 1851, and he lives a life, and follows a pursuit, which entails fewer vicissitudes than were inseparable from such in the early working of the Australian goldfields. He respects Sunday by an entire absence from work, holding it as a day of rest and relaxation, although not commonly



participating in its religious observances, but preferring to gossip with his neighbours, and travel from tent to tent to visit any acquaintances he may have on the same diggings.

Moreover, the digger of 1859 is a much more prudent, cared-for, respectable, and respected member of society than he was for the first two years after the discoveries, and consequent rush, in Victoria. Many, even at the time of my visit, were attended by their wives and children, and although the mode of life was rather rough, they appeared to be living happily and in tolerable comfort together. Now the townships at the diggings are as well provided with the common requirements of civilized life as any in the colony, and the several communities are almost as well organized, as social, and as well disposed, as at Melbourne or Adelaide.

The Government, too, in levying a duty on the gold exported, and so relieving the digger of the monthly tax of thirty shillings formerly imposed, has contributed greatly to the promotion of general harmony, and the eradication of those bitter feelings which, at the time of my visit, were entertained by the diggers towards the Government. The infliction of the licence fee, as well as the tyrannic mode of collecting it, if not duly tendered at the camp, tended very much to exasperate the miners; who subsequently, in many cases, used every endeavour to shirk it, and finally rising *en masse*, refused to pay only a much reduced fee for their mining privilege; the police were hooted with cries of "Jo-ey—Jo-ey";

monster meetings were held, and stump orators declaimed aloud the diggers' wrongs.

The collection of the tax had to be suspended for a month in the July of 1854, in order to allow of communication with the Government at Melbourne.

All the military stationed at the latter town were sent up to enforce order, but this non-pacific mode of treatment aroused the wrath of the diggers still more, and shots were exchanged which resulted fatally in a dozen or more cases on the diggers' side, and in the death of the captain and others of the troops.

It was a very erroneous and destructive policy that induced the then governor, an old naval officer, and a reputed tyrant, to endeavour to extort from our own people, at the bayonet's point, what a judicious civil measure would have at once had the effect of producing.

Naval men are usually too despotic and narrow in their views to be successful in their administration of a government with which they may have been entrusted, as was the governor in question on the occasion of such emergencies, and are far less calculated to administer well the duties of such an office than would be an intelligent unprejudiced civilian.

We remained only one night at the camp at Bendigo, and drove our tandem homeward as far as Kilmore on this the day after our arrival.









